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BOSTON CELTICS PRIDE

Volume 1, Issue 13
April 25, 1986



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Revolution

GREG KITE

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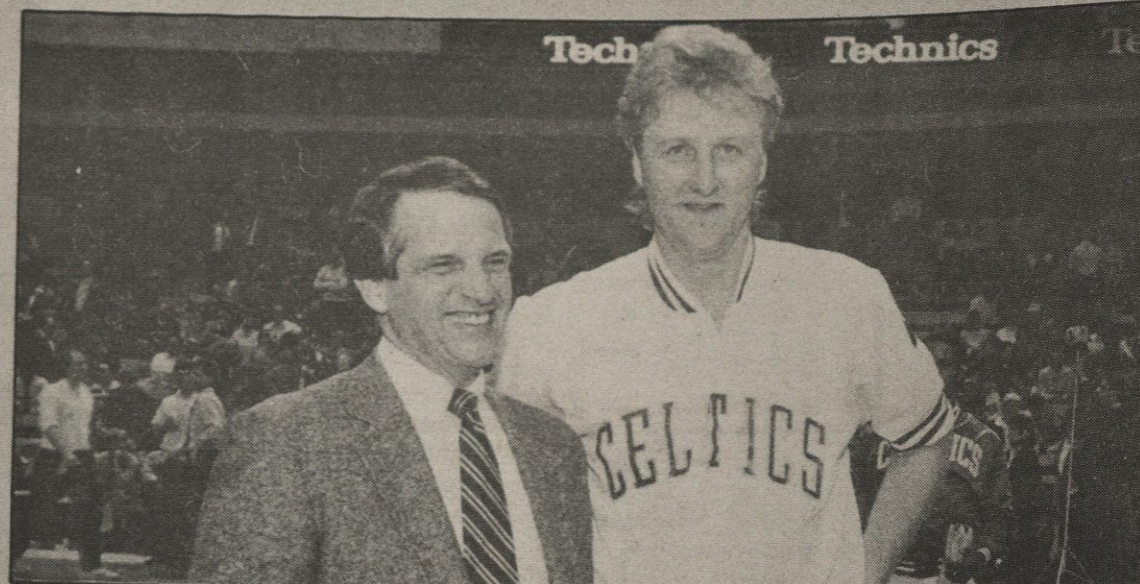
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Larry Bird Named Allstate/NBA Player of the Month of February

It came as no surprise to Celtics fans when Larry Bird, the team's star forward and the league's Most Valuable Player the last two seasons, was named the Allstate/NBA Player of the Month for the month of February. In the photo above, Larry is receiving his award from Frank C. Morello, Jr., Regional Vice-President of Allstate.

Bird averaged 29.9 points, 13.6 rebounds and 8.6 assists per game over the month. His brilliant month features six triple-doubles, only one of which occurred at the Boston Garden. Against Seattle on Feb. 13, the 29-year-old forward had 31 points, 15 rebounds and 11 assists. The next night in Portland he had 47 points, 14 rebounds and 11 assists. He registered back-to-back triple-doubles again on Feb. 23 and 25, when he had 30 points, 11 rebounds and 12 assists in Hartford, Ct. against the Pacers and then 24 points, 18 rebounds and 13 assists in New York. He finished February with 20 points, 13 rebounds and 12 assists in the Boston Garden against the Clippers. The Celtics finished the month with an 11-3 record, despite nine road games.

"He is as nearly perfect as you can get in almost every phase of basketball," said Laker General Manager Jerry West, whose team was beaten by the Celtics at home on February 16.

Future Issues Schedule

ISSUE 14 — MAILED - April 21	ISSUE 18 — MAILED - July 21
ISSUE 15 — MAILED - May 5	ISSUE 19 — MAILED - Aug. 25
ISSUE 16 — MAILED - May 27	ISSUE 20 — MAILED - Sept. 29
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VOLUME 1, ISSUE 13
APRIL 25, 1986

Cover...

It takes a special person to be content in a backup role in the NBA. Greg Kite is a special person and more than happy in his role on the Celtics. Photographer Steve Lipofsky found Greg doing what he does best.

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Ask Red Auerbach

QUESTION: How do you feel about the new music video featuring Larry Bird and Magic Johnson?

Lisa Melillo, Bradford, Ct.

RED'S ANSWER: Well, it's all marketing, all promotion. Good luck to them both with it, and I hope they make a lot of money.

QUESTION: What is the origin of the terms "point guard", "quick guard" and "power forward"? Also, could you please explain their functions.

Carl A. Beaulieu, Reading, Ma.

RED'S ANSWER: The point guard sets the stage for the offensive play that is coming up. He usually handles the ball more than anyone else on the team, particularly on the fast break. The off guard is usually the shooter. He is probably the better defensive player and is usually bigger than the point guard. A notable exception to this sort of generalization, of course, would be Magic Johnson, who plays the point guard, but the ideal point guard would be a guy like Isiah Thomas. The small forward is just something that somebody concocted; we don't have what anyone would call a small forward,

and we're none the worse for it. In fact, we don't really have a point guard, either, with Danny Ainge and Dennis Johnson both falling more into the off guard category. The power forward is obvious; he's usually a converted center whose strengths are defense and rebounding and who is willing to play facing the basket. I want to point out, though, that trying to put players into any one of these categories limits the player. In constructing a team, I never try to fit my players into slots like these. I consider these concepts spawned by the media; we just try to put our best players on the floor.

QUESTION: Why is Jim Loscutoff's name and not his number on the banner of retired numbers?

Dennis J. Fortin, Whittinsville, Ma.

RED'S ANSWER: We've had two great players -- and a lot of other good ones -- who have worn the number 18. When it got time to retire that number for Jim Loscutoff, Dave Cowens was already wearing it, with great distinction. Since you can't retire the same number twice, we retired the number for Dave and put "Loscy", Jim's nickname, up there to honor him.

EDITORS NOTE: "Ask Red Auerbach" is a regular feature of Celtics Pride. If you have a question for Red, please send it to Celtics Pride, 49 Locust Avenue, New Canaan, Connecticut 06840. Red will answer as many as possible in each issue.

QUESTION: Does the Boston-Philadelphia rivalry seem to be losing its intensity because of the weakening of the Philadelphia team?

Jeffrey Boudreau, Fitchburg, Ma.

RED'S ANSWER: Anybody who believes that the Philadelphia team is weak doesn't really follow basketball. I don't believe that the rivalry has lessened one single bit. Admittedly, the Sixers are not as close to our record as they've been in recent years, but it has been largely because of the injuries they have suffered this year, particularly to Andrew Toney. Also, don't forget, our record is even better than it has been in the past few years, making it even tougher for Philly to chase us.

QUESTION: I know you played basketball when you were in high school and in college, but were you ever a referee in an organized league?

Tony Reis, Taunton, Ma.

RED'S ANSWER: As a matter of fact, I was. I was a member of the National Board of Basketball Officials, and I worked high school games and worked some college games. I did a lot of officiating until I went into the service in the early 1940's. After that, of course, I went into coaching.

QUESTION: Is the size of the professional basketball court different from high school and college?

Britt Craft, Greenville, Mass.

RED'S ANSWER: No. The basketball court is a standard size, 94 feet by 50 feet, at any level of play. Sometimes, because of the limitations of high school gyms, they may use a smaller court, but that's the standard size.

QUESTION: Who is your favorite basketball player of all time, other than a Celtic, and why?

Lisa Melillo, Bradford, Ct.

RED'S ANSWER: My favorite player was Bob Pettit. He was a center and a power forward, and he played with great intensity every minute he was in there regardless of the score. He was a great shooter and a great rebounder. I admired his attitude and his abilities very much.



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WLVI TV 56 GANNETT BROADCASTING GROUP

The Modern Johnny Most: 1986 - Style

by Bob Schron

Johnny Most, 1986. The famous, nee legendary, broadcasting voice of the Boston Celtics, has profoundly influenced the scope of broadcasting. And in his own time: as networks in radio and television have expanded their coverage of nearly every sporting event imaginable, the emphasis of broadcasting style has been toward homogeneity. The voices are distinct models seemingly of Dick Enberg, Al Michaels, Marv Albert, for example. Newer outstanding broadcasters (Bob Costas, Roy Firestone, Jim Lampley) have proceeded in the same fashion: they are knowledgeable, informative, intellectual. But few remain in the business of a Johnny Most.

Most mixes information with color. He locates the ball on the floor for listening audiences, but he does so with a special feeling, perhaps demonstrated through nickname. The listeners knows that Jeff Ruland is setting up in the post--Ruland, part of the McNasty Brothers, with former teammate, Ricky Mahorn. And in tough rebounding action under the boards, we learn that Moses Malone is a hard, determined player. But he does get the benefit of calls, especially in Philadelphia. According to the Most description, Malone's actions are fine. But he never commits a foul, it seems. Most understands the heart of what makes sports work: fandom.

"I see Green (the Celtics color). I admit that. But that is why people come to the ballgame--i.e., they want to see their team in the ballgame. And, I think, that is especially true of the fans in New England." Most states. It was before game time last week; he is wearing a green searsucker sport coat with a green plaid shirt open at the collar. As he walks to the table at court-side to conduct his pre-game interview with K.C. Jones, fans call out to him from the far reaches of the Boston Garden balcony. That fits; this is the audience whose pulse Johnny Most listens to and plays like a brilliant doctor.

Most is a Brooklyn native, a graduate of Brooklyn College, where he played both football and basketball. He began his broadcasting career as a protegee of Marty Glickman, sharing the mike at games of the New York Knicks. His other models in the business include Bill Stern and Ted Husing. In a dramatic move which compares to any the team has made on the floor, the Celtics (Red Auerbach and Walter Brown) hired Most to broadcast Celtics games in 1952.

"I anticipated being here temporarily," Most recalled here last week. But I've been here 35 years,



Johnny Most: Will say what he thinks about anything as long as he has the facts.

primarily because of the treatment I have received by the Celtics organization, and because of my feeling for the Boston and New England fans.

"Red and Walter felt this way: basketball should be given a chance to sell itself. No cheerleaders, no big giveaways. The game should sell on merit.

"So I immediately incorporated that into my style. The game was to be reported. But I needed something, more, as I look back on it today. A turning point was the message Sammy Cohen, the former sports editor of the Boston Traveler-American, gave to me. He told me, 'You're doing great, but you have to be a Bostonian. Make the people feel you're one of them. And New England fans will take to you as one of theirs.'"

Basketball, and all sports, are a projection of the sports fans' need for a hero-villain drama. "I think all broadcasters realize this," states Most. "But I don't hide my point of reference like most do. My rooting interest is out front."

Most laughs--the familiar cacophonous sing-song which is an integral part of his style. Most has blended sound, description, and drama to elevate the legendary feats of the Celtics into history. There was the famous "Havlicek Stole the Ball" description; the overtime game commentary of Phoenix-Boston in 1976. His calls of the Henderson steal in 1984 and the Dennis Johnson game-winning shot in 1985 against the Lakers (both championship finals)

anything, or state 'expertise' about anything, without knowing the full story. I think it's hurt our business (the business of journalism). I never hesitate to ask when I don't know something, and I believe that this approach has helped my credibility in the league.

"I've been lucky; my sponsors have allowed me to say what I mean, mean what I say. That is, 'let it all hang out', be provocative, argumentative. But his is the exception; many, many reporters in our (broadcasting) industry are limited because they may have to touch on issues which are supported by sponsor dollars. There's nothing that a journalist can do because his hands are tied."

Most has had a dramatic resurgence in the past several years. Thought through by many in the local area when the Celtics were suffering through ownership changes and losing years, he has come back: from a stroke, from a hard period in his personal life, from a frightening battle with his voice. He is loved as always here; but he has gained renewed respect throughout the profession, too. It's a matter of personality and his ability to transmit that individuality within the message: his call of the game, each night. He's a stylist, as much as Bob Ryan is a stylist, or Larry Bird, or Red Smith. American originals, as is so popularly described nowadays.

And Johnny Most about the private life of the broadcaster Most: "You have a public and private life. But it's difficult to keep them separated, because your public persona spills over. My oldest son, who I'm very close to, would never allow me to attend tryouts of his when he was in high school. He did not want my presence to possibly intimidate the coach into making a decision for or against him. I had to remain wary of things like these, and I have some regrets about experiences I missed in my family life."

Ordway's Mentor

Among the benefits of the recent revival of interest in Johnny Most is a Fantasy Tape which he and colleague Glenn Ordway produce. For a fee, fans can obtain descriptions by Most and Ordway of fantasy games which the fan is the hero. "Stole the Ball!"

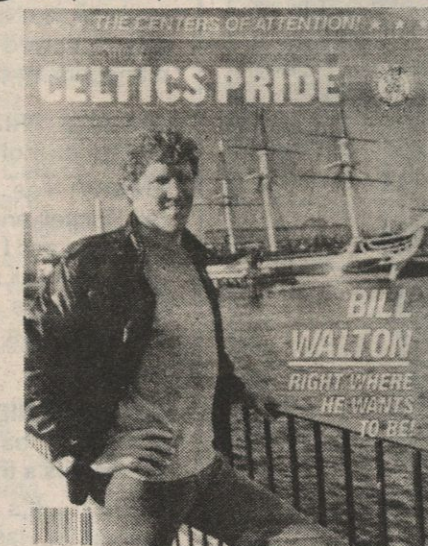
In a recent listing in Celtics Pride, Ordway, Sports Director of WRKO, named Most as one of his broadcasting models.

"He encourages me to be myself, to say what I think, and he's impressed on me that you've got to be your own man behind the mike," observes Ordway.

"What I've learned is that there is a great entertainment need in radio. I formerly thought that the primary need was description, only. But Johnny has altered my thinking. You can't survive happily with only total description. But in the same sense, we're both trying to describe."

"Johnny Most knows the game. He provides updated history in every broadcast. It's great to compare perspectives of the games of the past and the games as they are played now. It's insight: how did the past influence the game as it's played today?"

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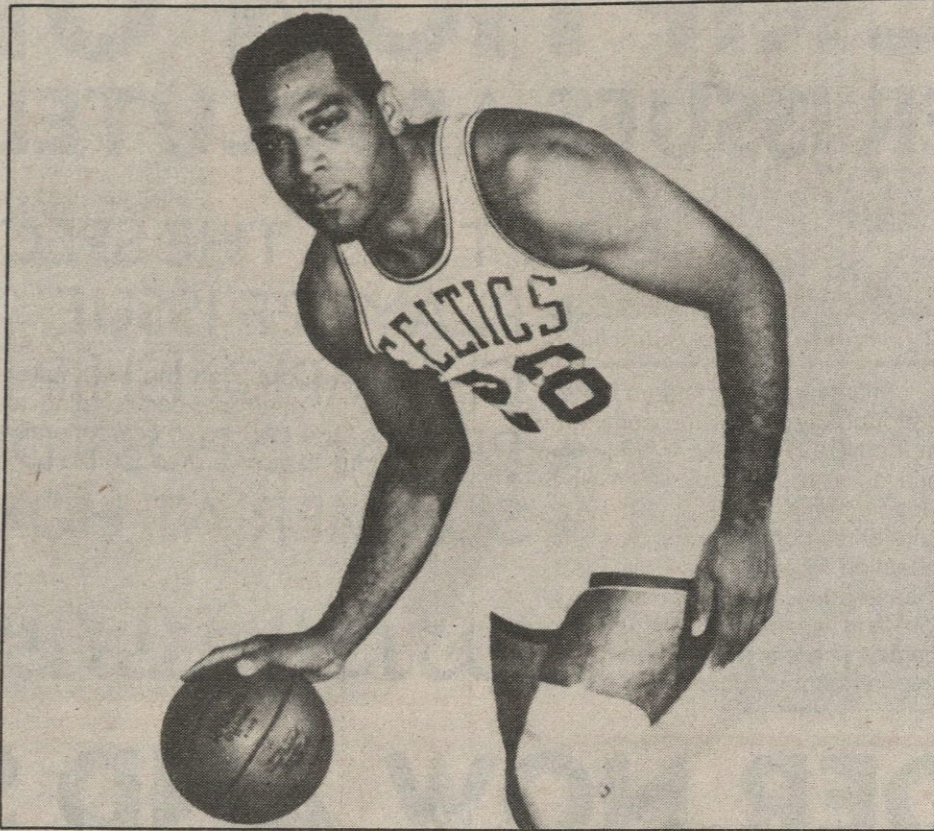
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Innerview

Wayne Embry



Wayne Embry: Celtics experience helped in all phases of his life.

in returning to basketball full-time?

EMBRY: I've thought about it from time to time, but I haven't made a decision. I would consider going into basketball full-time if a good offer came up.

CELTICS PRIDE: What are your remembrances of your two-year stint with the Celtics?

EMBRY: Obviously, I'd have to remember it as the epitome of the way a franchise should be run. Playing with the Celtics was an experience that helped me in all phases of my life.

CELTICS PRIDE: So the Celtics have influenced you in the business world...

EMBRY: It was being with a winner, and it rubs off. It was quite an experience. I don't think there's anyone in the NBA or any sports who can match what the Celtics have done. It would be very difficult to duplicate. Anybody who ever played for the Celtics should relish that.

CELTICS PRIDE: What was it like playing for Red Auerbach?

EMBRY: Red knew how to utilize personnel successfully. His ingenuity has built the Celtics tradition. He's still there and the tradition is still there.

CELTICS PRIDE: Are you interested

EMBRY: Bill wasn't only the coach, but he was also the best player. It was just good to be on the same floor with him.

CELTICS PRIDE: Looking back on your NBA career, how do you feel about it?

EMBRY: I just think I'm very grateful that I had the opportunity to play 11 years in the NBA, not to mention getting involved in basketball in a management capacity.

CELTICS PRIDE: Do you ever see any of your old Celtics teammates?

EMBRY: Yes, I've seen K.C. Jones, Bill Russell and Tom Sanders recently. Russ and I were supposed to play golf in Hawaii a while back, but I had commitments and he had commitments, so we were unable to work it out.

CELTICS PRIDE: You also operated a summer basketball camp. Could you tell us a little about it?

EMBRY: It's at Daniel Webster College in Nashua, New Hampshire. It runs for two weeks—a week for boys and a week for girls. All we ask the kids to do is give it their best for a week. We don't try to overkill the basketball instruction. We want to develop the total person, not just his or her basketball skills. We try to give each kid individualized attention.

working under Bill Russell, the coach?

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Celtics Diary

D.J. Has Learned to Compensate

Dennis Johnson has won honors on both the individual and team level throughout his ten-year professional career. Numbered among these accolades are NBA All-Star 1st Team; All-Star Defensive Team; All-Star Game in both Eastern and Western Conferences. He was the Most Valuable Player of the 1978-79 Playoffs; counting that season, and in 1983-84 in Boston, he has won two NBA titles, the only starting guard in the history of the league to accomplish this.

Dennis Johnson recorded some of his thoughts for **Celtics Pride** during the past two weeks.

Boston, March 15. Home again, finally, after the last of our major road trips this season. We were sluggish at the beginning of the trip, losing to Washington and Dallas, but we regrouped, taking wins over Houston, San Antonio, and last night, Atlanta. I played well in Houston, taking the ball inside most of the evening. Against Atlanta, I worked hard on the defensive end, and set things up down the stretch.



D.J. enjoys and respects the challenge.

Atlanta has a strong young team, undoubtedly one of the coming units of the NBA. I remember some times I had as a younger player in Seattle; Gus Williams and I physically could take on all comers and it was a talent question. Now I feel my game is more measured. Experience counts for a lot—and I'm pretty pleased with my game. There's a sense that it's me the younger guards (e.g., Doc Rivers, Jeff Malone, Alvin Robertson) are gunning for.

ton) are gunning for.

I enjoy and respect the challenge. This year and next and the year after, I'll be around and be tough. After that—at age 35—well, it creeps up on you.

Boston, March 16. A fine day at the office. We defeated the 76ers 118-101, the game was loose and easy for us, and we had our way on our home court against a team we have been arch rivals for what seems like forever.

I drove to the Garden early, listening to Whitney Houston, relaxing (I try to get down to the Garden two hours before game time); my routine during the season is built around maintaining peace of mind. All hell breaks loose on the floor, after all. Let my mind wander listening to jazz on tape, play hard, and generally take a meal afterward. Whether I play very well or poorly, I try to let it go fairly quickly. Can't dwell on it. There are too many games.

I matched up with Dr. J most of the game, new, because he usually has played forward when we've played them. He's a very excellent player still; but we had the better of it today. Even tried an ally-ooop, cutting behind Julius for a pass from Danny Ainge. We missed connections. Maybe in the Seattle days...

March 22, Boston. We defeated Chicago tonight; they played most of the game as if they were looking over their shoulder and maybe they were. Michael Jordan is slowly returning to the lineup and it is obvious what he means to their ballclub. He's a dynamic player, no question. But we handled them easily, just as we have most opponents this month. I've played on two championship teams, but what we're accomplishing as a team is unlike any other I've played on. There's a unique combination of talent, understanding of roles, coaching, and chemistry on this team right now.

Boston, March 24. We have a game tonight against the Rockets; we had a lot of time off this weekend and I spent most of it with my wife Donna and our son Dwayne. He's a fiery type, requires attention and care. I don't do anything during the season, although this city is enjoyable to play in. We've lived in the city since we've been in Boston so I've ridden the train to games sometimes. That's fun for a change; also I enjoy restaurants here (Chandler's, Scotch and Sirolo; Division 16), and concerts (Kool and the Gang, Stephanie Mills, Luther Vandross). But back to work tonight. After Houston, Milwaukee.

Boston, March 25. A wierd night. Ralph Sampson went up for a rebound, came down, and slipped. We heard a sickening crash, and he laid still for what seemed like hours. After he was carried off on a stretcher, and the game resumed, I felt an

almost noisy silence. Certainly, when I brought the ball up the court on the first play after he went down, I was searching my mind with some different thoughts. Athletic life is tops—but it can go quickly. Thankfully, he's recovered well and will be back.

I shot terribly, but I contributed (12 assists and some steals). I admit I once based my whole game on scoring totals. That was a young player's concept but I think I have a better understanding of what really matters in the game. Can you contribute? Can you execute on offense? Play strong individual and team defense? Will you play a role on a championship team? Answer yes to those questions, and you begin to understand the game and yourself better, which I think I do.

Boston, March 27. Contrasts. We have an easy time against the weaker teams, but in certain stretches, we forget our collective purpose. In the tighter games against better teams like we played this week, we have a much tougher time but we are able to concentrate even deeper, blocking out items like their leads (Houston led us by 10 and Milwaukee led us by 11). Not to mention the tension of "big" games.

I took the ball through the lane last night. On a consistent basis, in the halfcourt game and in the transition. And two-for-seventeen was another incentive. Points don't affect me but I want to be sure I produce positively on the offensive end. Not necessarily an ego need (although that's there, too); I just believe our team needs me on that end.

I've learned to compensate. If the shooting isn't there, or even the passing, I work even harder. I guess it's leadership.

The press gathered around me after last night's win over the Bucks. I was feeling good, discussing the big (29) scoring night, our second of two wins over strong clubs. They asked me about the shooting slump. I told them I thought only good shooters have shooting slumps! I was joking; I've practiced shooting constantly and my focus and touch are there generally, when the games count the most. I may miss—I'm not perfect—but the touch is right. And I want it.

We're doing well, getting our goals accomplished. We want to clinch the regular season title, and begin preparing for the playoffs. I believe we've come through a particularly tiring time of the year; at this time, if you haven't been rested, physical injuries can really begin accumulating. But we've been winning so we've been resting. We have the capabilities to win the championship. The abilities and the goal are driving this team to play stronger, like jazz reaching a crescendo. I'm confident, and sure of the effort.

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Greg Kite: Perfect Attitude, Team Player

The role of the backup center on the Boston Celtics --- a position of very limited playing time, less glory, much patience required. The talents involved: a peerless team attitude, fearlessness in the battle of the boards, an approach to the game which demands self-discipline and an indefatigable desire to improve.

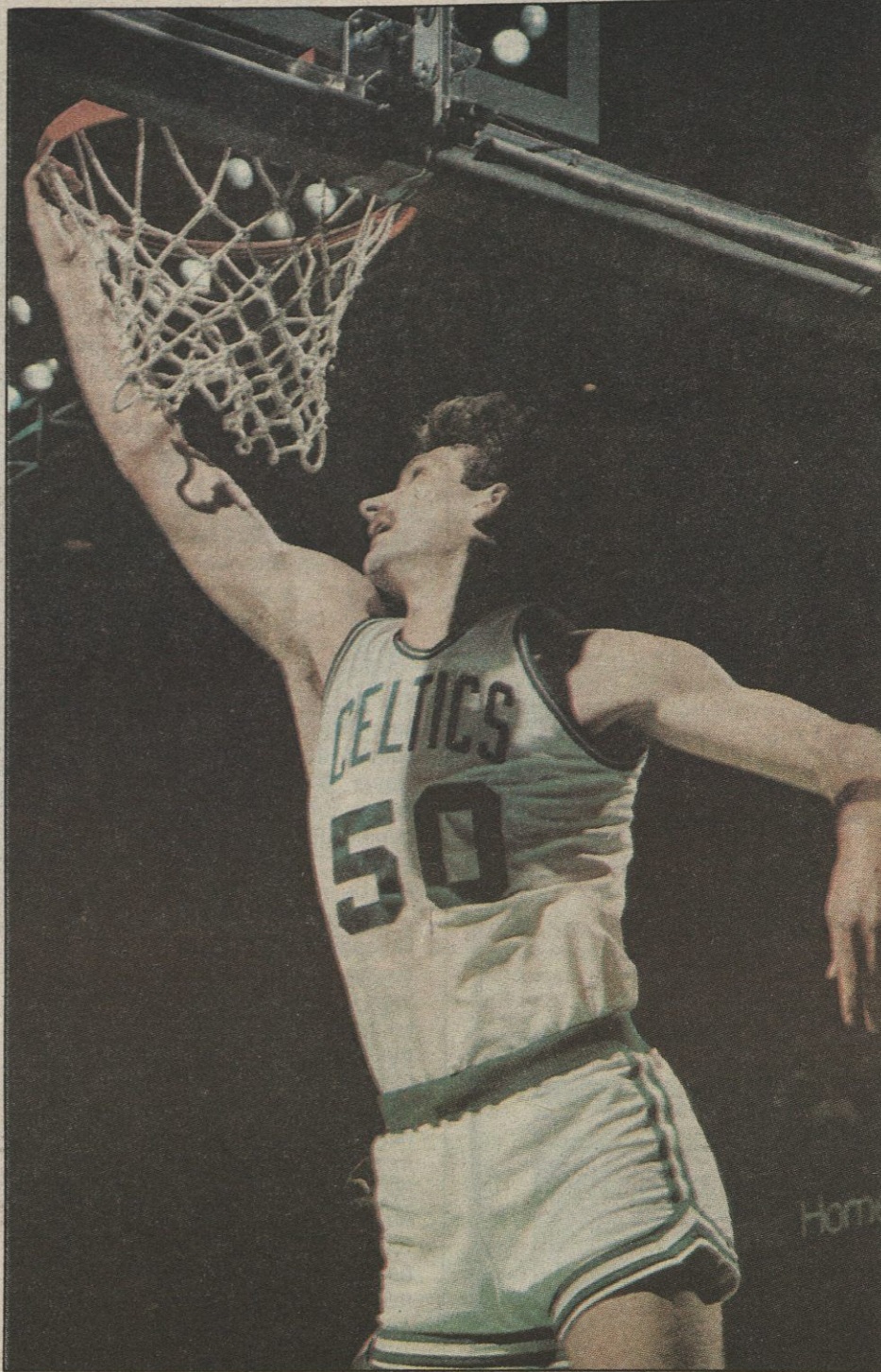
Introducing Greg Kite of the Celtics. For three seasons, Kite has played behind the frontline of the team; as the definition suggests, his time has been limited, highlighted by rare starts (and strong efforts) and playing time which allows players like Robert Parish, Kevin McHale, and Bill Walton much needed rest time. In this spectacular Celtics season, Kite has played minutes while fans have left the arena early, savoring the images of another Celtics win. As time winds down, it is Greg Kite playing. It is the Green Team striving for execution, coaches' favorable impressions, self-respect.

"I don't think anything about terms like 'garbage time'. Any player out there is playing because he likes to play. It's fun. And I approach each minute as an opportunity to improve my game," says the affable, smart, 6-11, 3rd year pro. Yet the limited time during games has proven only a supplement to Kite's work on his game. He utilizes practice time and post practice hours to elicit every latent skill he has. After those sessions, Jimmy Rodgers and Chris Ford, the team's assistant coaches, spend hours passing the ball into the brown-haired mustachioed player. A succession of drop-steps, pivots, left and righthanded hooks ensue. Repetition, exertion, timing, concentration.

"You have to play hard every minute you are out there," observes Parish. "Whether it's the last two seconds of a ballgame. Coaches watch, teammates care. I have a lot of respect for Greg."

Players at the end of the bench are faced with a dilemma; to maintain a position at the pro level, a player must be talented enough but more importantly, they must have a mental approach which is both tough, and team-oriented. A team-orientation means a realistic understanding of his strengths and limitations as a player. And tough enough to play hard and effectively when the infrequent calls do come for game playing time. Kite has succeeded in this role as a backup here. The team has won, he has contributed, he has improved.

But the irreconcilable problem is this: if the player is too patient, to undemanding, he risks being overlooked completely. That risk sometimes means being an endangered player, one who's cut, one who did not develop his ability



Greg wouldn't trade his situation for many.

enough because he waited patiently. For the team.

Greg Kite has tasted the sweet success of stardom as a player, in addition to enduring the difficulties a backup player must cope with. Kite played organized basketball since the age of ten, and starred, growing to 6-9 as a freshman in high school, at Madison, in Houston, under coaches Paul Benton and Lee Tynes. The strategic stress from the hierarchy was defense; it fit well with Kite's mature perception of the game. A turning point for the young player was his decision to stay back a year in 7th grade. He had to accept the disappointment a youngster feels at not making a grade. But he excelled thereafter, his confidence grew. And he thinks that period was crucial in his

formation of his dream to play pro basketball. The setback experience provided a work ethic foundation to the dream: success was hard-earned and would not come overnight.

Kite starred in high school, and was recruited heavily, as a senior All-American. He selected Brigham Young from his final choices of Duke, UCLA, Kentucky, Texas, and Houston. "My brothers and sisters attended that school and for me it was the best place all around: basketball, socially and spiritually."

Kite's career changed at the collegiate level, although this was not readily apparent. His first two seasons were spent playing a complementary role in BYU's guard-oriented offense, led by the collegiate superstar, Danny Ainge. The team reached the final eight in

the NAAs in 1981 before falling to Ralph Sampson and Virginia. After Ainge graduated, the team failed to maintain their former high level, and Kite's play suffered.

"Things just never worked out during my last two years," Kite reflects now. "The team never came along personnel-wise. We lost several games at the buzzer, and I was just too inconsistent and lacked the aggressiveness I once had. My confidence would go up and down."

"We could have been a better team and I could have been a better player," Kite concludes frankly and not without some remorse.

It is later, after practice, and Greg Kite is working out on the exercise bike in the corner of the practice gym at Hellenic College. He pushes the pedals powerfully, fast. The speed registers 60-70; the power reading is high. Kite accommodates every interview request, with a special generous spirit.

"Things have worked out," he says. "I got drafted by the Celtics, we're a winning team, I've won a championship. I wouldn't trade my situation for too many others."

"The toughest thing for me right now is to stay in condition. We have not had that many practices lately, so it is difficult to maintain a playing edge. I concentrate instead on improving specific things."

His voice grows adamant, now; Kite accepts his role, that of an industrious backup. He is uncompromising and if it is a thankless role from the outside, Kite has a self-appreciation of the emotional dues he pays. This is evidenced by among other features, a dry, quick wit. And Kite may be sitting most games, but he's enjoying the challenges the pro game offers. The primary challenge is continuing to develop his game in these limited minutes. And making a tangible contribution to the team simultaneously.

Kite is reminded that besides extended sitting time, there have been glory days in his Celtics career. The critical 31 minutes start against Larry Smith of the Warriors earlier this year. The effective minutes in the play-offs last June. The time-spaced starts against Utah last year, and Washington in the most recent (1983-84) championship season. He smiles (He remembers them, too); but he answers in a way which informs subtly---and Kite is intelligent, especially at the subtle level---that posing such reminders is sort of missing the point of what Greg Kite is about as a player.

"I hope I'm always motivated, whether it's playing 31 minutes against the Warriors, two against the Lakers, or garbage time. Hey, I'm a

player with pride and every player wants his share of recognition. But I want to go out there, in practice and in games, and improve my game each time.

"I realize I've gotten to this level, and it was by playing. So when I'm not playing less, I'm working extra hard to maintain that same attitude. Namely, I love to play. And basketball is a team game. If an individual can contribute to a team goal by mostly sacrificing for the team, if he loves the game, he has to be content with the input. How successful you are in a team sport depends on how each

individual sacrifices for the team, anyway.

"But you can't concede your own development. There are three ways of improving: Practice and repetition; watching and studying; and playing in games. Definitely you don't improve as much if you're not playing in games, but if you have (a correct team attitude), and practice, you can remain forceful as an individual without complaining. That's important; the coaches have to know you're there and you're eager."

"Heck, I play garbage time, but it's an opportunity to work on my

game. I'll go after loose balls, rebounds, and play team ball. And I'll execute on the offensive end. You never want to concede the team discipline."

"It goes back to the practice floor and self-discipline. It comes down to (at practice): do I go home or do I stay and run a few extra laps. I don't always stay, but most of the time I do."

Kite is happily married to Jennifer Cox and the two are proud parents of twins. He is a classy individual; low-keyed, giving, but with great inner strength and resolve.

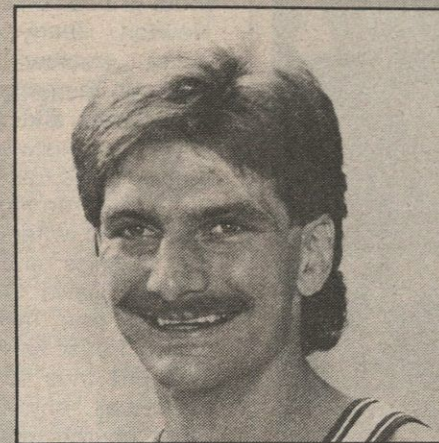
Typical of this was minutes after the Celtics had defeated the Bucks in Boston last week. Kite had dressed quickly; a DNP for the evening. Yet he could talk about his relegated role

---honestly, openly, without anger.

"I'll play any minutes I'm asked. My minutes allow rest for the starters, and simply put, we need effective playing time from Robert, Bill, Kevin, and the frontline if we're going to mount the type of challenge we should."

"I'm only able to go out and play the best I can, work the hardest I'm able. I believe the coaches see that, and I believe I've brought the level of my game up higher. I understand and fully accept the concept of my role and although it may be difficult to accept sitting and risk being overlooked, I think I've been here long enough so the coaches know what I can do. Hopefully they feel I have enough potential."

Self-Portrait



Greg Kite

BIRTHDATE AND PLACE OF BIRTH: August 5, 1961 in Houston, Texas

OCCUPATION: Backup Center, The Boston Celtics

FAVORITE MUSICIAN: Bill and Bo Whittaker

FAVORITE FILM CHARACTER: Chris Ford as himself in "The Fish That Sank Pittsburgh"

IF I COULD BY ANY CAR, I'D BUY: Mercedes

IF I WERE REINCARNATED, I'D BE: I don't believe in reincarnation.

FAVORITE ALL-TIME TV SHOW: Jeopardy and Leave It To Beaver

FAVORITE CURRENT TV SHOW: Cosby Show

FAVORITE ANIMAL IN THE ZOO: Otter

FAVORITE FOOD: My wife's shrimp, sausage, and fish gumbo, plenty hot.

FOUR GUESTS AT MY FANTASY DINNER PARTY: Red Auerbach, Jan Volk, My Agent, and a Signed Contract for the Next Several Seasons

FAVORITE NBA CITY: Houston

FAVORITE RESTAURANT: In Houston, Atchafalya River Cafe; in Boston, Scotch and Sirloin

FAVORITE COMEDIAN: Bill Cosby and David Letterman

FAVORITE BOARD GAME: Trivial Pursuit

IF I HAD TO CHOOSE ANOTHER PROFESSION, I'D BE: Sports Editor of the Wall Street Journal

FAVORITE DRINK: Lemonade

OLDEST PIECE OF CLOTHING: Baby Shoes

I'D SPEND MY LAST \$10 ON: Time; and on my family

I WISH I KNEW HOW TO: Play a musical instrument

FAVORITE MOVIES: Cool Hand Luke; "Amadeus"; "To Kill A Mockingbird"; "It's A Wonderful Life"

FAVORITE TV STAR: David Letterman

FAVORITE MOVIE CHARACTER: Soliare in "Amadeus"; Bush Man in "The Gods Must Be Crazy"

MOST EMBARRASSING MOMENT IN BASKETBALL: Passing the ball accidentally to referee Paul Mihalak. He was wide open and I heard he can score those with regularity.

SOMETHING I'D LIKE TO SEE: Instead of providing aid to the Contras or planning military intervention in the Middle East, scheduling a tag team wrestling match between the teams of Mr. T., Hulk Hogan, and The Refrigerator vs. Khadafi and the Sandinistas.



Kite will play any minutes he is asked.



Jenny Kite: Wife, Mother and Basketball Fan

by Wilma Mahoney

The meeting, courtship and marriage of Greg and Jenny Kite might never have happened, except for basketball. A high school All American, Jenny went to Brigham Young University on a basketball scholarship, as did Greg. Although Jenny didn't take up the sport until the age of fifteen, she distinguished herself enough to be offered several athletic scholarships, but chose B.Y.U. because of its Mormon Church affiliation.

The Orlando, Florida, native was a sophomore child psychology major and member of the women's basketball team when she first spotted her future husband. As Jenny tells it, "I first saw Greg at the gym, shooting baskets. He was a freshman and I was a sophomore at B.Y.U. I told my roommate, 'That's the guy I'm going to marry.' Then I contacted a friend who set up a date. We went out and I talked him into marrying me. I knew right away, as soon as I saw him that he was the one!" Jenny laughs, "For him, it took about three months before he decided he couldn't live without me."

The Kites married on May 5, 1981. Greg was the Celtics' first round draft pick in '83, so after graduation, Greg and Jenny came to Boston. They own a home in West Newton where they spend their time watching television and playing games. Admitted homebodies, the Kites also enjoy tennis, although Jenny admits that neither is very good at the game.

Their lives now are centered on their three month old daughters, Melissa and Mekell. Jenny is thrilled with their identical twin girls, saying, "Just having a family is what I always wanted to do. I could teach and have taught pre-school. I've also done some high school coaching, but I was never career-minded, I just wanted to raise a family."

Although most people have trouble figuring out which daughter is which, Jenny has no such problem, saying, "Melissa is a little bit bigger. They're beautiful, of course, they have blue eyes and dimples. They're an awful lot of hard work, but I'm loving every minute of it."

"Greg is very good with them. He's the youngest in his family and has never really been around kids, whereas I have real young brothers and sisters, so I've grown up with babies. It was quite a natural thing for me, but for Greg, it was a little different. He's adjusted well and he's doing a good job with them. It gets hard sometimes, but they're very good babies."



Jenny feels right at home here.

Regarding the special adjustments with twins, Jenny normally hires two babysitters, if she's asking high school age girls to care for the girls, but she adds, "When one's sleeping, the other's awake, so it makes it easier for one person to take care of them. This also makes it harder for that one person to get any rest." Jenny expressed relief that Melissa and Mekell both sleep well at night, which helps.

Jenny admits that the family

misses Greg when the team is out of town, but says, "It won't last forever so we'll handle it while it's here. We try to make the most of the times when he's home." When Greg's away, Jenny commiserates with Michelle Ainge.

"Michelle's my best friend here. We do lots of things together, and try to keep each other sane while the guys are on the road. We get together for dinner and watch the games together." The girls' mutual

commitment to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, keeps both Jenny and Michelle busy, as each teaches a monthly lesson for the women of the Church at the Weston chapel.

Although motherhood has cut down on Jenny's free time, she still dedicates herself monthly to her topic of Spiritual Living, adding that Michelle teaches the lessons on social relations.

Past summers have found the Kites travelling while Greg played in summer basketball leagues and attended school, they expect to spend most of this coming summer in West Newton. Jenny looks forward to warm weather, and says that although they might visit her parents in Orlando and go on the Celtics cruise, otherwise, they'll enjoy staying in the East with the babies.

In her free time, Jenny is an avid reader and writer of poetry. She likes the classics and recently finished reading David Copperfield for the second time, although she names Chaim Potok as her favorite author. She still tries to find time to play basketball, enjoying the sport with other church members. Before she became a mother, Jenny played weekly, but finds it much more difficult to schedule now.

Expressing a preference for both Mexican and Chinese food when they dine out, the cooking of choice at the Kite residence is Southern style. Jenny says, "I like to cook, although I'm finding I don't have a lot of time for it now. I'm certainly not a gourmet cook at all. I grew up on meat and potatoes, and that's what we both like. We eat a lot of barbecue, grits, black-eyed peas, the whole bit. Southern fried chicken is my speciality."

Before their daughters arrived, Jenny never missed attending a Celtics game. She is enthusiastic about both the Celtics management and the fans. She feels, "The fans are wonderful. Although I don't have any experience with other teams, they couldn't be any better. They've been especially nice to Greg."

"Sometimes, it's hard, in the position he's in. He doesn't get to play a lot, and in that situation, you may not be appreciated. The fans are great. I think they realize that he does work to earn his pay. They appreciate him and that really makes me feel good."

As a serious basketball fan, we asked Jenny for her opinion on the Celtics going all the way this season. After stating that the 1984 World Championship was one of the most exciting things that she and Greg ever experienced, Jenny proclaimed, "I think this is the year. I can feel it. It's coming...I think it's ours!"



K.C.s Corner

Increasing Confidence

The past two weeks were eventful ones for our team, a period which has given us an increased feeling of confidence about ourselves as a team. This has come in three main areas; we have continued working hard on the defensive end, we have executed our game-night offense consistently. And we have been able to include individual efforts within the overall scheme of our offense.

The goals as we head into the play-offs are two-fold. We want to get added rest for players like Dennis Johnson, Larry Bird, and Kevin McHale (We have given Robert Parish suitable time this year with Bill Walton on our team). Another goal going into the playoffs is to continue adding some variation to the attack.

We played possible play-off contenders during our first full week back in Boston; we defeated the Cavs, Pacers, and Bulls in successive contests, each night receiving important contributions from different men. Larry Bird was outstanding against Cleveland down in Hartford, setting a 3-point field goal season record in the process. This shot generally isn't a high percentage shot, but for Larry, we make an exception. It seems to get him, us, and the crowd going. The following night we used a big night from Robert Parish to defeat the Indiana Pacers in the Garden, 127-108. Robert is having a big year; this night it was 28 points and 17 rebounds, and holding Steve Stipanovich, a player we respect, to zero points. Against a team like Indiana, we want to go directly at their inside game, challenge them with our strength. Finally, the Bulls were defeated fairly easily, with Dennis playing effectively. You do not want these teams to defeat you; before the play-offs, they gain confidence. And it makes their season.

The following set of games proved no problem for our team to rise to the challenge. Houston and

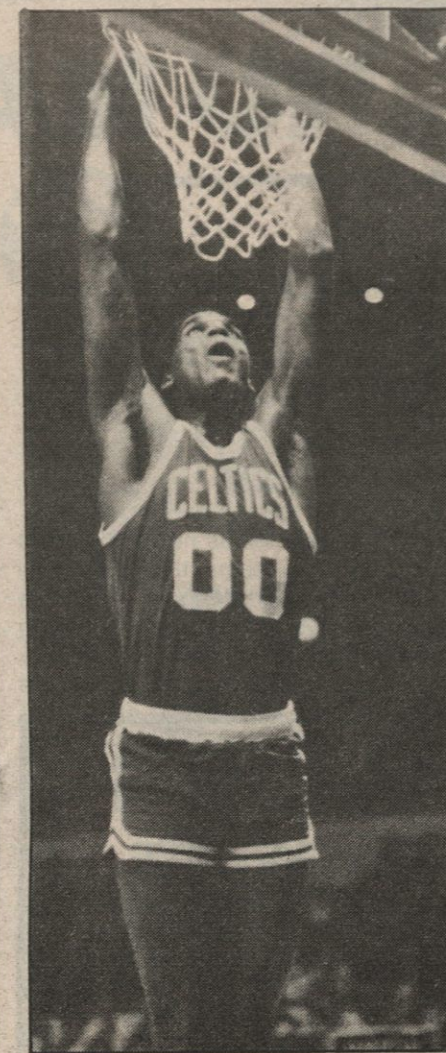


Larry Bird: A 3-point record.

Milwaukee are two of the quality teams in the league. They are teams of power who play smart and add defense. The strategic philosophy is to match their intensity, and then play your game. Any team with that type record has the confidence which says "we know we can beat you."

The added challenge for our ballclub is other teams are high as a kite to knock Boston off. The problem is, how to keep the play sharp and the intensity continuously high, and then raise that up another level when the better teams come in.

Fortunately, because we have competitive athletes, this takes care of itself. Scott Wedman played a fantastic ballgame against Houston, as did Larry Bird. But Dennis Johnson did not, if you consider his shooting. We withstood the Rockets, 114-107, and had to take on the Bucks, who play a sagging defense. DJ at this point took control, bouncing back with the determination he has, and leading our ballclub to the win. Dennis is a producer on a consistent basis. He has developed the leadership and



Robert Parish: Having a Big Year.

ballhandling skills our team has needed down the stretch. His character symbolizes the effort of our team. These men have great pride, so a coach's role here is to guide the competitors with some strategy and direction. I don't really have to "fire up" this team for the better teams in this league.

Milwaukee zoned us considerably this night; Dennis and Danny Ainge persistently challenged their big team with drives and end-to-end transitions, and this varies our look on offense. This is an example of preparing the team for the play-offs. A change occasionally keeps us going, continual adjustments on the part of our opponents. This penetrating attack adds one more thing for us as we look down the road.

We are playing some of our best ball of the year right now and we obviously are intent on keeping this constant. Our approach is decidedly more relaxed this year--if we may use last season as comparison. Last season we were injured and fatigued.

This season we have a more versatile and enthusiastic group off the bench. That this has contributed to Robert's renewed play this year cannot be questioned. It also gives the entire team a better frame of mind as the season winds down. We won't suddenly be inserting players into the lineup who have not played minutes this year. Rick Carlisle, Greg Kite, and Jerry Sichting are all players we have come to depend on. They'll play a few more minutes each night, to keep the minutes spread around before we start the second season.

And we'll continue to make the necessary adjustments each night. A coach has to be especially alert when the team is being praised as much as ours has recently. You want to build the confidence level; you don't want to play the role of Hollywood Jones, either. The approach is to improve nightly, and keep building on this throughout the post-season.



McHale: Around for a long time.

Celtics - McHale Agree To Contract Extension

The Boston Celtics announced that the team and All-Star forward Kevin McHale have agreed to a multi-year extension on McHale's current contract. The two-time NBA Sixth Man Award winner previously had a contract in effect through the 1986-87 season.

In accordance with team policy, no further terms or details of the contract extension were disclosed.

McHale, 28, was a 1980 graduate from the University of Minnesota and helped lead the Celtics to the NBA World Championship in 1981 and 1984.



BOSTON CELTICS PRIDE



M. L. Carr

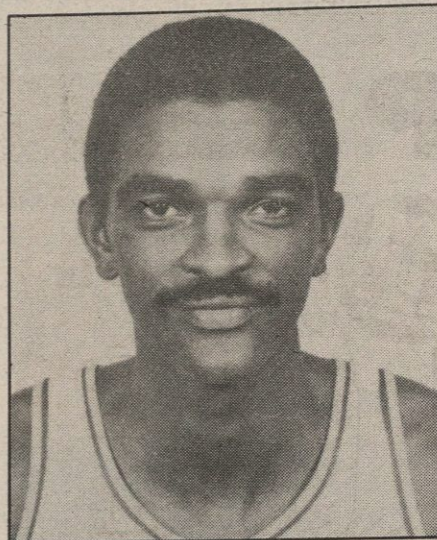
Will Celtics Ever Have A Slump?

Those of you waiting for the Celtics to have a slump might have to wait until summer to see it. This is a very talented team, which has found its groove. The guys on the team know what to expect from each other and are complimenting one another very well-- to perfection.

This team has so much depth that when someone is having an off-night,

someone else can come in and take up the slack. This is a championship-caliber ballclub.

I should also point out the Celtics have a great deal of mental strength, too. The great teams not only go out and beat the teams that are competitive and challenging like the Lakers or Milwaukee, they also go out and beat the teams they're supposed to beat. Remember, if you lose



Sampson: Pretty scary.

to Cleveland one night and beat LA the next night, it doesn't matter-- you're still 50 percent.

People always say, "I can't get up for the weaker teams." That should not be the case. Those weaker teams are the ones you should get up for and put away.

You shouldn't prepare for a game against a weaker team any differently than a game against a stronger team. You should look at it as being another obstacle and you have to hurdle that obstacle.

A lot of teams will play well against the Celtics, Lakers or Bucks and have letdowns against teams like Indiana, Cleveland or the Clippers. That's the difference between the good teams and the great teams. The great teams don't have letdowns against weaker clubs.

The expectations for this club are so high, for us to go out and lose to Indiana, we would get more publicity for that than if we beat Philadelphia. The team and coaching staff understand that.

The measure of success is whether or not you win. In a race, no one remembers you if you finish second, third or fourth. What you set up for is first--the ultimate goal is to win the championship. Last year, the team had a very good year. One game separated it from being a great year. Getting into the finals is the short-range goal, but the team has made winning the championship its ultimate goal.

And this team is capable of doing it, if they keep playing the way they are. Sure, there's always the danger of getting bumped off early in the playoffs-- that always exists. But this team is mentally strong and won't allow it to happen. The Celtics will have that playoff mentality, where no matter what adversity arises, they will meet the challenge.

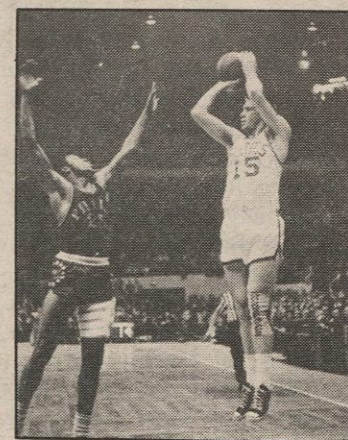
Someone brought up the fall Houston's Ralph Sampson had in the Garden a few days ago. I wasn't at the game and didn't have a chance to watch on television, but I've heard it was pretty scary. Obviously, athletes know and understand they are vulnerable--there is a risk factor when you go out there and play. Because of the rewards involved, they outweigh the risks. You have to try to put the risks out of your mind.

If it happens that you do get hurt, you have to deal with it. You don't want to think, "I just don't want to get hurt." That's how you get injured. You don't go out trying to avoid injuries, but you don't go around getting yourself in a position where you're going to get hurt.

You've got 10 big guys on the court and there's a lot of contact--jumping, running, banging-- and there isn't a lot of space. People will get hurt on occasion.

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For Scott Wedman, Patience and Practice Make Perfect

by Bob Schron

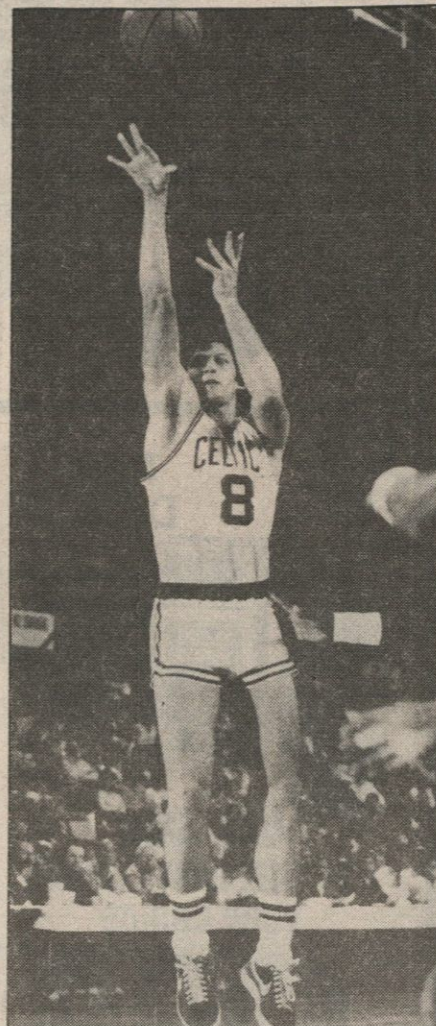
The reversals of fortune in the year of Scott Wedman have included 3-minute stints earlier this season against the Washington Bullets.

This took place during the phase of the season what might be called BGT, i.e., before the arrival to prominence of The Green Team. It seemed like ancient history, the ice age of Christmas, if that game should be remembered. Christmas: The Celtics blew a 25-point lead to the New York Knicks as the starters of the Celtics played much of the way in the two overtime disaster.

Two days before the Christmas encounter, Scott Wedman had finished practicing (He stays after practice most days, shooting his patented one-handed jump shot, sometimes hundreds at a session, from all angles, distances; he, a strong, good-looking man, frowned when asked about his performance this year.

"I haven't been as consistent as I'd like with my shooting," he stated at time. "So I've made up my mind to produce in other areas. It's a contribution if you go out there and rebound. You help if you play good defense. If you set an effective pick in situations, you're doing the job." On Christmas, Wedman played nine minutes and was part of the afternoon's bench freeze-out.

The reversal of the turns of the fates. Wedman's game and playing time began increasing as the team swept a brief pre-New Years West Coast trip. His shooting, defense, and position play, all major facets of his game during the All-Star years in Kansas City, returned and his contributions sparked wins in Indiana and



Wedman wants more consistency.

Atlanta in January. The latter game stirred the team. Boston had trailed 70-47 moments before the half, and rallied behind Wedman's strong fourth quarter play.

In that game, the Celtics suffered a potentially major loss, however. Kevin McHale had played the night before on an injured Achilles tendon. Despite scoring 20 points against the

Hawks, he damaged the area severely. The injury forced him to miss 14 games through February and March. Enter Wedman.

It's a time-honored virtue: practice and patience make perfect. Wedman's countless practice time jumpers paid sudden dividends for the team: he took McHale's Forward starting position and the team lost nothing in the win-loss ledger. He averaged 14.9 ppg, with 4.8 rebounds, in 32.5 minutes per contest. And he contributed more; with Wedman in the lineup, Larry Bird shifted to Big Forward, and resumed his sometimes forgotten board game. And with Wedman in the lineup, "we became a perimeter team," asserted Bird.

"I think we became a more versatile team," said McHale later. "We learned we have a variety of weapons on our team. Not just the inside game."

With these sustained contributions, glory also came Wedman's way. He played an outstanding pair of games against Los Angeles in The Forum, and against the 76ers in Boston. He shot the Celtics to a key win in Washington, with perfect outside streak shooting, reminiscent of his record shooting performance against the Lakers in last season's first game of the play-offs. But with McHale's return --- March 5th against the Chicago Bulls --- to the starting lineup, Wedman's role has again shifted.

He is again an unsuspected weapon, a role he accepts and understands.

"Right now who starts, if I start, doesn't mean much to me. What is important is to get thoroughly ready for the play-offs. I'm continuing to concentrate on my total game when I do get minutes. I'll overplay some on defense. I'll double down. I'll be physical on the boards. That's different from last year, when I would think only shooting."

"The main thing is to stay motivated. I'm playing behind three great players in Larry, Kevin, and Robert (Parish). I want to stay ready and help the team."

"My particular role any given night depends on the game. Lately I've just tried to play the total game, and shoot and not worry. The thing about shooting for me is, with my reputation, if I stay hot, I'll usually get more minutes. But it's not something I dwell on."

"And if I play poorly, I'll try to come back the next night and make the necessary adjustments. Off the bench you have to stay positive. If my shooting's off, I'll probably shoot more, to get the feel back."

Wedman recently gave evidence his best season in Boston continues: he shot 9-10 from the floor, including a 3-point field goal as he spurred the Celtics to last week's come-from-behind victory over the Houston Rockets, 114-107.

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The Lottery is Looking Good!

The Celtics have rights to the Seattle Supersonics first round draft choice this season as a result of the Boston trade of starting guard Gerald Henderson, from their defending championship team of 1984. That Pre-Season trade in the fall of 1984 now appears to have landed the Celtics in the NBA draft lottery, which will be drawn on May 11.

The standings in the lower half of the Western conference shaped up as follows, as of Monday, March 31:

7--Sacramento	33	42
8--San Antonio	33	44
9--Phoenix	29	44
10--SEATTLE	29	47
11--LA Clippers	28	47
12--Warriors	28	48

The standings reveal the Sonics to be 4½ games behind the Kings for the seventh best record in the conference, 3½ behind the Spurs. Although the Sonics defeated the injuries plagued Spurs in San Antonio, 107-104, March 23rd, the Sonics continued to falter on the road. Their mark is 6-32 there and they must play in Dallas and Houston next week. One of their remaining road games was in Los Angeles, Tuesday and the Lakers, were hungering for revenge after the Sonics upset the defending league champions in Seattle, 88-87, March 29th. Upending the Lakers was a moral victory perhaps; against the Kings two nights earlier, Seattle had rallied from a 16-point deficit behind the shooting of Ricky Sobers to tie their playoff slot competitors in the final seconds. But Eddie Johnson of the Kings was fouled with :01 remaining, sank the free throws, and sank the Sonics' playoff chances further.

Games against direct competition are worth two games. A win over the Kings would have reduced the margin to four. Instead, the lead of the Kings turned into a 6-game margin. The Sonics have become spoilers.

Sonic Coach Bernie Bickerstaff used Sobers increasingly after 2nd year player Danny Young and veteran Al Wood made minimal contributions

Robert Parish lists players around the league, past and present, he feels are excellent role players:

Michael Cooper
Bobby Jones
Junior Bridgeman
Gerald Henderson
Cedric Maxwell
Alvan Adams
M.L. Carr

Parish lists the best centers in the league presently:

- 1--Kareem Abdul-Jabbar
- 2--Moses Malone
- 3--Jack Sikma
- 4--Bill Walton
- 5--Artis Gilmore
- 6--Robert Parish

off the bench. Sobers scored 15 against the Jazz in a 116-108 Utah win, March 24th. Following a 120-107 loss in Phoenix the following contest, Sobers played a key role in the near-miss against the Kings. The 11-year veteran's appearance was symbolic; he has always been a moody individualist, and he played erratically earlier this year. Bickerstaff had not wanted to have to rely on him, anyway. But as a last resort, Bernie brought him back, and now---late---he has produced.

Fire and brimstone depict Sobers in the team context, and they have plagued the Sonics' outstanding rookie player, Xavier McDaniel. He is a wonderful player, fast, powerful in the post-up action, and an accurate shooter who has the unusual capability to be a scorer as well. But he has numbered fighting opponents this year too: Kenny Carr, Ken Johnson, Calvin Natt, Eddie Johnson, Cliff Robinson, Mike Mitchell, Charles Pittman, and Kevin Willis. These court fights brought him into another court fight; he was charged with a misdemeanor assault on his wife and was demanded by a Seattle court to perform community service and probation for a year.

Bickerstaff maintained the team's commitment to youth, however, despite the inconsistent play of Young and Michael Phelps. He started Tim McCormick, a 1984 hardship from the University of Michigan's 1984 NIT championship team (so the Sonics could bring Tom Chambers off the bench, another early season plan which was shelved, (because of Chambers's fractured foot). McCormick played unpredictably. More woes for the team's plans to build.

Finally, if the Celtics do enter the lottery, as was probable earlier this week, there is a possibility they could choose only as high as 3rd in the whole draft. Because of a trade between Cleveland and Dallas, the Mavs have obtained the right to select behind the Cavs in this year's draft. But because the Cavs were allowed to purchase a 1st round choice throughout this season after the team was sold by the imposter Ted Stepien in 1983, the *deus ex machina* procedure forbids the Mavs from having the 1st choice in the entire draft if the Cavs fail to make the playoffs. If the Cavs miss the playoffs, Dallas enters the lottery.

On Monday, the Cavs were 3½ games in the lead for the final Eastern Conference playoff position. The Celtics likely will have that lottery chance, another tribute to the team's incomparable planning.

The Sonics schedule:

Sat. April 5 at Dallas
Tue. April 8 at Houston
Thu. April 10 Dallas in Seattle
Sat. April 12 Warriors in Seattle

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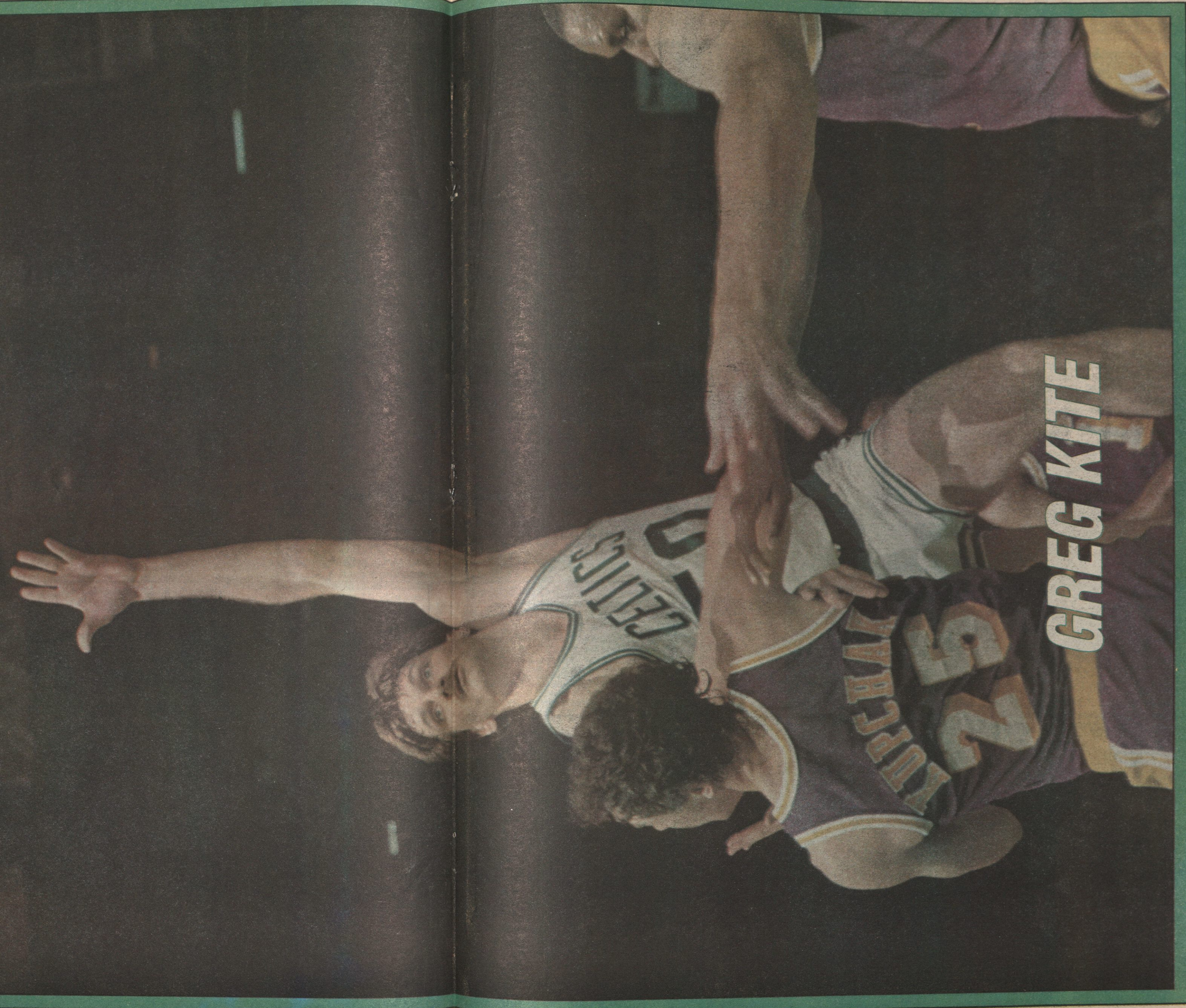


STOP & SHOP

56 WLVI

Fans Receive Celtics Pride

Fans entering the Boston Garden for the March 21st confrontation between the Celtics and the Chicago Bulls were treated to a special giveaway -- a free edition of the latest edition of **Celtics Pride**. This was part of a special promotion by the Celtics to introduce the official fan magazine of the Celtics to more Celtics fans.



GREG KITE

Celtics Confidential

by Bob Schron

In recent weeks, the Celtics have met Cleveland, Indiana, and the Chicago Bulls; all three of these teams are prospective play-off contenders. None appear to be anxious to test the Green, arguably playing their best ball since the 1983-84 play-offs. The Cavs changed coaches, removing the promising young coach George Karl in favor of players coach type, Gene Littles. Littles is a former ABA player (he played on 1975 champ, Kentucky, with Artis Gilmore and Maurice Lucas); he also was discovered when a young player on the Washington D.C. playgrounds --- by Arnold "Red" Auerbach.

Little gave up playing, "perhaps a year or two early, because I didn't want to be an 'old' player without a future. I preferred to be a young coach, with my career in front of me." Littles is a student of the game and enjoys excellent relations with his players, but he's inheriting a team which is old and injured. K.C. Jones sympathizes but points out "He can-

not refuse that opportunity. But can anybody turn around a season in fourteen games?" Jones answers that question with ironic laughter.

A recent letter to The Boston Herald offered high praise for former Celtics player and coach, Tom Sanders. The classy Sanders, now co-director of the Center for Sports Study at Northeastern University, spoke at a banquet for Pop Warner football players in Walpole. Sander's message, according to James Skogseth of West Newbury, was that it's important for young athletes to feel good about themselves and happy about playing for the sake of playing... Scott Wedman was a featured speaker at a banquet in Everett... Bill Walton and Robert Parish were featured at a function held by the Polaroid Corporation in Hartford, before the C's game at the Civic Center against the Cavs, March 18th... Larry Bird made an appearance for Spalding after the Celtics entertained the 76ers at the Garden, March 16th... John Havlicek, The Captain, made several appearances on

behalf of the Genesis Fund, a non-profit organization dedicated to the treatment of children born with birth defects.

Comparing his rookie situation with that of Sam Vincent, the C's prize 1st round selection, Waymon Tisdale of the Pacers, stated, "It's a lot tougher. I'm coming into a losing situation, and I've never experienced that before. The Celtics have a good team and they have a winning tradition. It's going to take me more time to get exposure to that type of situation, here." Tisdale has had to cope with two. "I've switched from being a post-up player to facing up. And I was surprised to be so fatigued at this point of the year. In February, I hit the (athletic conditioning) wall. But I'm starting to get a second wind..."

Shape of the Game. According to Dale Brown, coach of the Louisiana State University cinderella final four entrant, the seven-foot center in the collegiate game is less important "because of the tremendous quickness of players who are 6-6, 6-7. These type of players are able to accomplish many of the same things average seven footers do. It's the reason so many games in the NCAA's have been won by quick teams over taller teams... Robert Reid, Rockets' point forward and an old Celtics nemesis dating back to the 1980-81 play-offs and duels with Larry Bird, feels the Rockets have still some distance to travel before matching the best teams in the league. "We seem to be able to keep our games together for 42-44 minutes. But then we have lapses, a loss of concentration. For us to defeat the Bostons and Los Angeles's of this league, we have to play 48 minutes of intense basketball... Bill Fitch, former Celtics mentor, thinks the Rockets are close to being the second best team in the league right now. "The Celtics are the best; they're reaching a peak which will last for 2-3 years. Our hope is to catch them when they're declining. We're close to LA now." Fitch thinks the Rockets rank with Philadelphia, Atlanta ("A team on the come"), and Detroit on a plateau slightly below the Celtics.

Ted Sarandis, Boston sportscaster, has been told by a trusted Naval Academy source that David Robinson, the Navy Center who led his Midshipmen to the final eight in this season's tourney, will be allowed to enter the NBA draft in 1989, two seasons after he graduates... A team that could use Robinson's service, the Pacers, received praise from Indianapolis Star writer, David Benner. "I think Irvine's done a very respectable job; he has only five tradeable players on the team (Herb Williams,

Vern Fleming, Steve Stipanovich, Waymon Tisdale, Clark Kellogg) and the Pacers have a shot at making the play-offs..." According to Jack Craig, Media columnist for the Boston Globe and the Sporting News, the NBA's rating boost in recent years is attributable to Larry Bird, "but that is hard to measure. He is a white athlete in a black dominated sport; he is as visible as any athlete in America right now, and he demonstrates the ultimate success of practicing the work ethic..." Johnny Most, The Voice, says about Boston and Los Angeles, "The reason they dominate is because of their depth. But that advantage would be neutralized if they suffered injury. They would come right back to the pack."

Akeem Olajuwon, who Robert Parish thought was the best rookie of the year last season, perceived little significance to playing in the Garden, March 24, when Houston played here. "What was more important was winning. We are trying to stay ahead of Denver..." David Thirkill made a guest DJ appearance on WILD radio last week... Recent visitors to the Celtics scene included Gary Holland, Larry Bird's prep coach, Eddie Bird, Larry's highly recruited brother, and Dr. Joe Melchiorre, Ray Melchiorre's dad. Eddie Bird worked out with the Celtics, March 25th... According to a source, there has been a first order of 500,000 for the Weapon, the sneaker being promoted by Bird and Magic Johnson... Dennis and Donna Johnson are expecting to purchase a home west of Boston.

Quinn Buckner, former Celtic and a man of immense character, was along side Coach Bobby Knight during the Indiana University futile NCAA title chase last week. At the end of the Hoosier season, Buckner was named Assistant Coach of the team.

Celtics Pride Family Welcomes New Member

Much of what is written in Celtics Pride is the work of Associate Editor Robert Schron, a fine writer and tireless worker who has covered the Celtics for years. Bob and his wife, Edna, welcomed a new addition to their family, and therefore to ours, on the evening of Thursday, March 27th, when Laura Ruth Talbott Schron was born, weighing in at 7 pounds, 12 ounces.

Celtics Pride sends our best wishes to the Schron family.

GAME BY GAME - REVIEW

March 18, at Boston Celtics 126, Cleveland 96

Thanks to Larry Bird's 43 points, the Celtics won their 21st game in a row at the Garden, tying a team record. It was the fifth time this season and 18th time in his career that Bird has scored 40 or more points in a game.

Thirty-four of the Bird scores came in the first half, during which the C's built up a cushy 64-48 lead. Bird made five of six shots from three-point range.

Scott Wedman came off the bench to score 13 points for Boston, and Dennis Johnson had 11 points and 11 assists. Eddie Johnson had 22 points for the Cavaliers. Boston College product John Bagley scored eight to go along with six assists.

"We don't go into a game thinking we're unbeatable," Dennis Johnson said. "But when we hit the floor, we know that if we play our game on offense and defense, we know we'll give anybody a tough time."

Added Jerry Sichting: "We seem to be able to answer everything the opposition throws at us. When we run through our plays, we always seem to get the ball to the open man."

March 19, at Boston

Celtics 126, Cavaliers 96
CLEVELAND
Lee 5-10 3-4 13, Hinson 4-8 0-0 8, Turpin 4-12 0-0 8, Bagley 4-12 0-0 8, Free 11-25 3-4 26, West 0-2 2-4 2, Poquette 1-2 1-2 3, E. Johnson 10-15 0-1 22, Brewer 2-6 0-0 4, McDonald 0-1 0-0 0, Minniefield 1-4 0-0 2.
Totals 42-97 9-15 96.

BOSTON
McHale 5-9 3-5 13, Bird 17-24 4-4 43, Parish 5-8 0-0 10, D. Johnson 4-8 3-4 11, Ainge 3-6 0-0 6, Sichting 3-6 0-0 6, Walton 0-1 0-0 0, Wedman 6-9 0-0 13, Carlisle 3-6 0-0 6, Vincent 3-6 6-6 12, Kite 1-3 0-0 2, Thirkill 2-4 0-2 4. Totals 52-90 16-21 126.

Cleveland 28 30 27 21--95
Boston 35 28 36 28--126

Three-point goals—Free, E. Johnson 2, Bird's, Wedman. Fouled out—Hinson. Rebounds—Cleveland 36 (Lee 12), Boston 57 (Parish 12). Assists—Cleveland 15 (Bagley 6), Boston 36 (D. Johnson 11). Total fouls—Cleveland 20, Boston 16. A—15, 134.

Celtics 127, Pacers 108

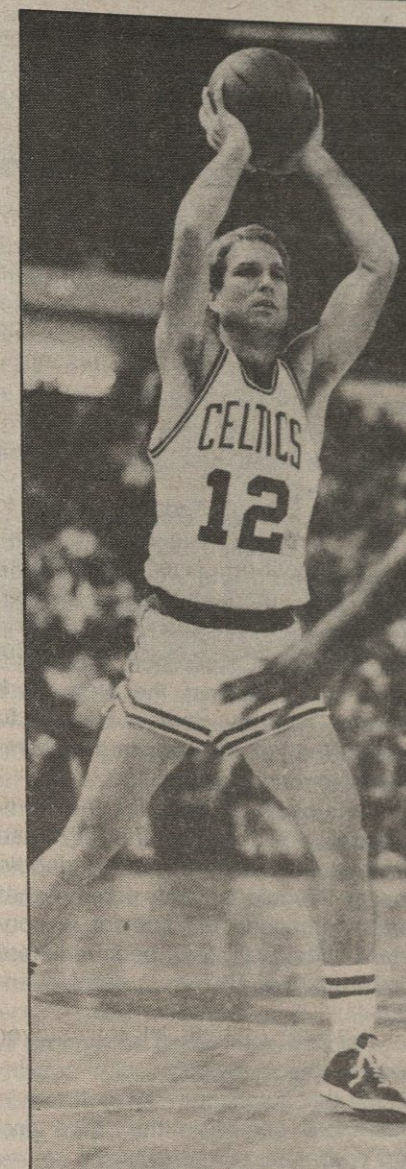
INDIANA

Anderson 2-5 0-0 4, Williams 11-20 2-2 24, Stipanovich 0-6 0-0 0, Richardson 2-9 0-0 4, Fleming 9-14 3-3 21, Martin 7-17 4-4 18, Warrick 3-8 3-4 9, Tisdale 6-10 2-2 14, Garretts 1-2 3-5 5, Stansbury 2-3 1-1 5, McClain 1-2 0-0 2, Gray 1-10 0-2. Totals 45-97 18-21 108.

BOSTON
McHale 8-11 8-9 24, Bird 7-14 7-8 21, Parish 12-17 4-4 28, Johnson 4-12 6-6 14, Ainge 10-14 2-2 22, Sichting 2-5 0-0 4, Wedman 0-4 0-0 0, Walton 3-5 0-0 6, Carlisle 0-1 0-0 0, Thirkill 1-12 2-4, Kite 0-1 0-0 0, Vincent 1-2 2-2 4. Totals 48-87 31-33 127.

Indiana 26 29 25 28--108
Boston 33 30 31--127

Fouled out—Martin. Rebounds—Indiana 41 (Williams 10), Boston 55 (Parish 17). Assists—Indiana 24 (Martin, Warrick 5), Boston 28 (Johnson 6). Total fouls—Indiana 24, Boston 18. Technicals—Indiana coach Daniels, Indiana Coach Irvine. A—14,890.



Sichting: Has the answers.

Celtics 127, Indiana 108

It was another night at the office and another rout for the Celtics. Boston center Robert Parish scored 28 points and grabbed 17 rebounds--both season highs--as the Celtics drubbed the Pacers. Larry Bird scored the first two baskets of the game on layups, and Boston never trailed thereafter.

Bird scored 21 points, Dennis

Johnson 24 and Danny Ainge 22. Herb Williams' 24 topped the Pacers.

March 21, at Boston Celtics 126, Bulls 105

Not even the presence of Michael Jordan in the Bulls' lineup could prevent Boston from goring the visitors from the Windy City. The victory gave the Celtics' their 20th division title. It was their 23rd straight triumph at the Garden.

"They're almost plain bored," Bulls Coach Stan Albeck said. "That's the feeling I got sitting out there. Everything they do is orchestrated with a perfect game plan. They react very well to every situation."

The Celtics reacted well enough in the first 24 minutes to forge a 69-47 halftime lead. Larry Bird, who wound up with 32 points, scored 24 of them in the first half. Kevin McHale had 22 during that span.

"When you're up by 22 at the half it's a pretty good feeling," McHale said. "All we have to do is play decently the rest of the way to win."

They did, so much so that the Bulls outscored Boston by just a point in the second half.

Orlando Woolridge led the Bulls with 24 points. George Gervin and Jordan had 20 apiece. McHale had 22 points for the Celtics and Dennis Johnson added 21.

Can winning night after night get boring?

"It can't," Celtics Coach K.C. Jones said. "When the ball's thrown up in the air, that's not boring. We're working to get the lead, and when we get a 12-point lead, we want to work to maintain it."

March 24, at Boston Celtics 114, Houston 107

The Celtics made it 24 straight wins at the Garden, but that's not important.

The crowd received a scare when Rockets center Ralph Sampson

fell and hit his head on the floor while battling for a rebound with 2:19 left in the second quarter. Sampson had no feeling or movement in his right leg before being carried off the court on a stretcher, according to Boston team physician Thomas Silva. X-rays of the neck and head proved negative, and Sampson did regain feeling in his leg once in the locker-room.

"I think we're going to be all right," Silva said. "But it does scare everybody."

Said Rockets Coach Bill Fitch, the former Celtics pilot: "I'm not concerned about the loss. The only important thing is if Ralph's back is all right and there's no disc problem. If he needs a little R & R in the Bahamas, I'll take him there myself."

Fitch probably wished Larry Bird was in the Bahamas instead of the Garden on this night. Bird scored a game-high 36 points and also grabbed 10 rebounds. Scott Wedman scored 19 points, missing just one of 10 shots from the floor. Eleven of those tallies came in the fourth quarter.

March 26, at Boston Celtics 121, Milwaukee 115

A layup by Larry Bird with 4:39 left in the game spurred Boston on an 8-0 run, leading them past the Bucks of former Celtic Don Nelson. The victory gave the Celtics 26 straight wins at home, just two shy of the mark set 36 years ago by the old Minneapolis Lakers. For the Bucks, this marked the end of a five-game winning streak.

Bird had a game-high 35 points, shooting 11 of 19 from the line and hitting all 11 of his field goal tries. He also bagged a pair of three-pointers. Dennis Johnson helped out with 29 points and Robert Parish had 16. Bird also had 12 rebounds and six assists.

Terry Cummings had 31 points and 15 rebounds for Central Division --leading Milwaukee.

Celtics 114, Rockets 107

HOUSTON

McCray 2-5 0-0 4, Olajuwon 12-22 5-9 29, Sampson 7-13 3-3 17, Leavell 7-16 2-2 16, Lloyd 9-13 4-4 22, Peterson 1-6 2-4, Reid 3-6 2-2 9, Harris 2-5 0-0 4, Walters 0-0 0-0 0, McDowell 1-2 0-0 2. Totals 44-88 18-22 107.

BOSTON
McHale 6-15 2-4 14, Bird 11-19 11-11 35, Parish 9-16 1-1 19, Johnson 2-17 3-6 7, Ainge 5-9 0-0 10, Walton 1-3 2-3 4, Sichting 1-2 0-0 2, Wedman 9-10 0-0 19, Carlisle 0-1 0-0 0. Totals 47-97 17-23 114.

Houston 36 21 30 20--107
Boston 29 32 27 28--114

Three-point goals—Bird 2, Wedman, Reid. Fouled out—McCray. Rebounds—Houston 46 (Olajuwon 14), Boston 58 (Bird 10). Assists—Houston 22 (Leavell 6), Boston 30 (Johnson 12). Total fouls—Houston 26, Boston 18. Technical—McHale. A—14,890.

Celtics 121, Bucks 115

MILWAUKEE

Pressey 3-9 6-8 12, Cummings 13-27 5-6 31, Brewer 6-11 0-0 12, Moncrief 7-15 11-12 25, Hodges 7-14 1-1 15, Davis 3-8 0-0 7, Lister 1-8 2-4 4, Pierce 3-4 3-3 9, Fields 0-1 0-0 0. Totals 43-98 28-34 115.

BOSTON
McHale 6-15 2-4 14, Bird 11-19 11-11 35, Parish 7-16 2-3 16, Johnson 9-14 11-13 29, Ainge 5-13 0-0 11, Walton 4-7 2-2 10, Sichting 0-1 0-0 0, Wedman 2-6 0-0 4, Carlisle 1-1 0-0 2. Totals 45-92 28-33 121.

Milwaukee 34 28 30 23--115
Boston 34 24 33 30--121

Three-point goals—Bird 2, Davis, Ainge. Fouled out—Brewer. Rebounds—Milwaukee 54 (Cummings 15), Boston 59 (Bird 12). Assists—Milwaukee 20 (Pressey 7), Boston 26 (Bird, Johnson 6). Total fouls—Milwaukee 28, Boston 24. Technicals—Milwaukee Coach Nelson. A—14,890.

WRKO Brings Their Advertisers To Practice

WRKO-Radio (680 AM), the station that brings the Boston Celtics to New England, hosted a special party for their advertisers at a Celtics practice at the Boston Garden on Tuesday, March 25th.

More than 250 guests of the station joined the Celtics for their practice, which was hosted by K.C. Jones, himself a personality on WRKO's morning radio show. After the conclusion of practice, they adjourned to the Blades and Boards Club in the Garden, where Dan Griffin, General Manager of WRKO, and Michael Wheeler, General Sales Manager, presented gifts to each of their major sponsors.

Finally, food and drink was served and each of the members of the Celtics family and staff joined the festivities. It was a fine afternoon for WRKO, giving them an opportunity to thank their sponsors, who have enabled the voices of Glenn Ordway and Johnny Most to be heard over the Celtics' station for the past five years.



Eddie Gnillooly

"More Taste and Less Filling"

It could be a natural, an intriguing bickering theme for a series of Miller Lite commercials particularly if the casting featured Lite All-Star Celebrities Tom ("More Taste") Heinsohn and KC ("Less Filling") Jones to settle the growing arguments concerning the greatness of the current Celtics team and Larry Bird.

"More Taste" and "Less Filling" have been integral parts of the Celtics legacy for the past 30 years, both as coach and player. Heinsohn and Jones each has collected eight championship rings as players. "More Taste" coached the Celtics to two championships while Jones is closing in on his second.

Except for the legend, Red Auerbach, himself a Lite All-Star Celebrity who could serve in the commercial series as judge and jury, no one is more qualified than Heinsohn and Jones to engage in spirited arguments to determine if the '85-'86 Celtics team is the best ever assembled in NBA history or if Larry Bird is the greatest player to participate in basketball at any level.

During their involvement over the last 30 years, Celtics teams have won 15 NBA championships, 20 division titles (including this year) and have finished with the best record in the NBA 17 times (also including this year).

Only one team, the Los Angeles Lakers in '71-'72 won more games (69-13) than any Celtics club and ironically KC Jones was the assistant coach of that squad (Bill Sharman was the head coach). Heinsohn's Celtics won 56 contests that same year and he's quite knowledgeable of the strengths, character and abilities of that vintage Lakers club.

With that additional background, the script writers would have "More Taste" and "Less Filling" engage in a friendly controversy as to whether this Bird-led team is better than the Russell or Cowens clubs that



Tom Heinsohn: "More Taste"

demolished and embarrassed opponents during their reigns in the NBA, rather than involving the vintage Lakers team of 1971-1972 in the script.

The authenticity of a debate between Heinsohn and Jones would be chock full of credence since both played during the Bill Russell era. Heinsohn coached through the exciting Dave Cowens years and Jones is currently at the helm during this unbelievable Bird fantasy trip.

Jones has gone on record describing the '85-'86 Celtics as the best team ever in the NBA but Heinsohn is still slightly reluctant to cast his vote at this time and no one can blame him. The Celtics of the '50's and '60's won 11 championships in 13 seasons, including eight straight. That's a feat that will never be duplicated.

Heinsohn also coached the '72-'73 Celtics team that finished with 68-14 record and would have won the NBA title that season if John Havlicek hadn't injured his shoulder in the Eastern Conference championship series against the New York Knicks. The New Yorkers went on to defeat the Lakers easily in the championship round.

A typical scenario for the commercial would be in one of those famous pubs where famous people meet--it could be any pub for that matter because the subject is constant wherever two beer drinkers congregate to discuss current events.

"More Taste" would be regaling in yester years, arguing quite convincingly that it was more difficult to win basketball games in the '50's and '60's because there were more rivalries with only eight to 10 teams in the league.

But, "Less Filling" would counter that today's schedule is longer and more grueling and that the players spend more time traveling than playing basketball and that it's tougher because you don't see many of the teams too often.

"More Taste" would step up the argument pointing out that in his opinion the players in the old days were more intelligent because the teams had the pick of the college crop since there weren't many openings in the NBA.

Digging down for his best defense, which has always been his forte, "Less Filling" would retaliate quite boldly that today's athletes are stronger, quicker, taller and more talented, resulting in a change in the pace and strategies of the game.

The debate would be endless. It would wind up as a commercial miniseries with both Heinsohn and Jones making strong arguments but hard pressed to reach a real conclusion because it's next to impossible to compare the abilities of teams and players of different eras.

One fact no one can debate is that the Celtics in 1985-'86, have played before more fans than any NBA team in history. Through 74

games, the Celts attracted sellout crowds at 59 games. In the other 15 games, the smallest non-sellout was 13,101 in Atlanta, only 100 less than capacity while the largest non-sellout crowd was in New York with 18,329 in attendance.

You've got to admire Bird's drawing power. That's why Heinsohn and Jones and just about everyone else in the world agree that Bird is the best player ever to play the game. However, "More Taste" and "Less Filling" could make some interesting arguments comparing Bird with Russell, Elgin Baylor, Bob Pettit, Bob Cousy, John Havlicek, Oscar Robertson and the countless others whose jerseys hang in basketball's Hall of Fame.

But a more stimulating Lite debate between "More Taste" and "Less Filling" would be the impact Bird, Russell and Cowens made to the Celtics lore. All three are 6 foot 9 and are, and have been the "franchise" player of their era.

Reviewing the first seven years of each player, the record shows the Russell-led Celtics won 379 and lost 151 while capturing six NBA titles, seven division championships and finished with the best record seven times.

In Cowens' first seven years, the Celtics compiled a 382-192 record while winning two NBA championships, five division titles and finishing with the best record twice.

Through 74 games this year, the Bird years have resulted in a phenomenal 427-138 record, two NBA championships and six division titles (including this year). The Bird-Celtics also achieved the best record six times (including this year).

During Russell's first three years in the league the teams only played 72 games a season and didn't put together a 60-win season until his sixth year when the Celts finished 60-22. They were 62-18 in '64-'65.

Cowens' clubs accomplished 60-plus seasons twice while Bird has led the Celts to 60-plus wins in six of his seven years. The other year, the team finished with 55 wins.

Laurels for the most impact on a team in one season definitely belong to Bird. The year before he joined the club, the Celtics finished with their worst record ever, 29-53. In his rookie year, the Bird-Led Celtics, virtually the same team, finished 61-21, a 32-game turnaround.

Cowens improved the Celtics ten games in his rookie season from 34-48 to 44-38 while Russell, who missed half of his rookie year due to competing in the Olympics, helped better the Celts mark from 39-33 to 44-28, a five game difference.

"More Taste" and "Less Filling" could become a regular commercial feature because the subject matter is so intriguing. Imagine Judge Auerbach calling both to the bench for a conference to settle the differences. It could win an Emmy.

Jimmy Rodgers' Analysis

How Celts Stack Up Against Contenders

by Bob Schron

Assistant Coach Jimmy Rodgers views the Celtics' 1985-'86 season positively, but with some reservations. "The season is far from over," he cautioned in an interview last week. "What you do in March isn't remembered much in June, if you aren't going to receive the championship ring."

The Celtics will likely face the challenge of several strong teams as they endeavor to defend their 1984-'85 Eastern Conference championship. Most expect the Celtics, if they win the east, to meet the Lakers in a rematch of last season's championship final. The Lakers defeated the Celtics in last years final.

"We have been able to build on our game all season," Rodgers stated. The problems we experienced earlier in the year were ones of adjustment. We brought in new players, and they had to find their places in the system.

"We also weren't sure if Bill Walton could play the power forward position in addition to the center spot. As it turns out, we've received a large contribution from Walton, and the bench's roll --- including holdovers Rick Carlisle and Scott Wedman --- have allowed our starters more quality playing time.

"I'm reluctant to compare our teams from one season to the next. But I do feel strongly, that when we've played our best ball, we have not made many adjustments to the strengths of other teams.

"Our most effective play comes when we go out there and athletically say, 'Here we are this is what we do. Try and stop us. You adjust.'"

Rodgers gave some informal scouting reports on some of the strongest contenders in the league:

Houston: "Their big people are a force --- Sampson and Olajuwon are legitimate stars. But we have similar strengths in their power areas.

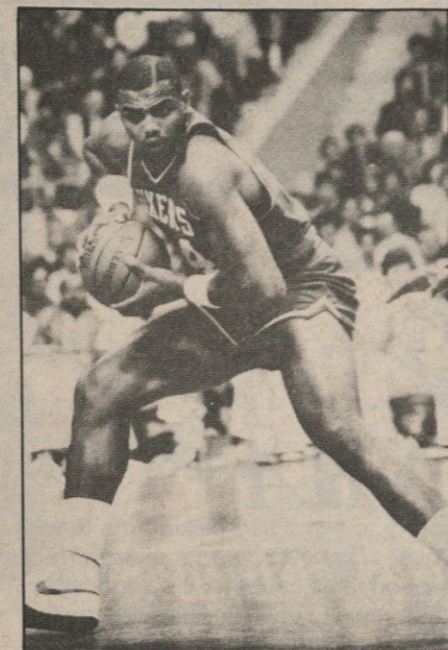
Atlanta: "They are similar to the Lakers. They try to rush the ball up the court and make the game a track meet all night. But they have improved this year; they have a strong inside game, plus they have the penetrating game of Spud Webb and Glenn Rivers. Dominique Wilkins is a great player. To beat Atlanta, you have to play at a high level with your game."

Milwaukee: "They're a little different. They play with the point forward attack, and try to isolate your defense with one-on-one, two-on-two, and Three-on-three attacks, which force you away from a team defense."

Philadelphia: "They have an experienced unit, a superstar attack in the power of Moses Malone, the one-



Rodgers: Never stops scouting.



Barkley: Has mobility.

on-one game of Dr. J., and the mobility of Charles Barkley. The thing which adds to their threat is the knowledge they have of our team, and vice-versa. Every game is dangerous, and in a play-off series where there's no tomorrow, you never know what will happen."

Los Angeles: "You have to play at your highest level to beat the Lakers. They run the floor, they live off your mistakes, and they want you to take poor shots. To beat them, you must play your game, you must take care of the basketball, and you must get the game into a half-court defense battle. Like Philly, both teams know the other so well that there's an added dimension to the rivalry."

What accounts for Boston's superiority in the face of such formidable opposition?

Boston: "Our inside game is powerful and this forces teams into almost a mandatory double-team. But the difference is that this year our guard play is so much stronger. We have been able to continually burn teams from the outside, or on the penetration, when this is taken away. We have been injury-free and we have the added depth. Plus we have the consistent, nightly, great game contribution from Larry Bird.

"We are a team of emotion, but we do not overreact to either losses or wins. We take each game as the only game there is. We do not look forward and we do not look back.

"We look at each game as an opportunity to learn from our successes, as well as our mistakes. Without sounding too clinical, we try to be a self-model for consistency.

"We are enjoying this season, but we are intent on sustaining our competitive edge. For the coaches, this means added preparation. For the players, this means applying the adjustments, and maintaining a hunger

cording to Rodgers. "You can win games and games against lower teams, but if you're unable to sustain this against better teams, you know you have a ways to go.

"Houston and Milwaukee came into Boston playing very well. Beating them, when they had play-off intensity and victory over Boston on their minds, was additionally satisfying."

Rodgers has gained his expertise from the coaching of the likes of Ralph Miller, Bill Fitch, Red Auerbach, and now K.C. Jones. To these, he adds a special perceptiveness about offensive planning and the unique trends each season takes. Much of this was gained through scouting, but at this point of the season, he is doing less, because of technology.

"We try and see each team live in the beginning of the year, but with the use of videotape and cable, we don't really need to make extra trips later. We always have a recent film to scout a team we will play."

The essence: Boston's approach is they want to execute their game, and let the other team adjust. "But we never stop scouting, nor do we ever stop making game to game changes."



Kevin McHale and Celtics Salute Shootout Winners

At halftime ceremonies during the Celtics game against the Indiana Pacers on March 19, 1986, Kevin McHale was a part of a special presentation. Kevin, the 1986 Honorary Chairman of the Boston Celtics/Easter Seals Basketball Shootout, joined Massachusetts Easter Seal child George Andrews and Stan Berkovitz, the President of Zayre Corporation in presenting an autographed Celtics team basketball to the 1986 Shootout winner.

For an unprecedented third year in a row, the winner was Jim Halpin from Holliston, Mass. Jim and the four other Basketball Shootout winners were guests of the Celtics at the game.

The rest of the Celtics join Kevin McHale in saluting these young athletes for their basketball abilities and their loyal support of Easter Seals.

BOSTON CELTICS PRIDE



Glenn
Ordway

"Best in the NBA"

Well it's that time of the year when sportswriters and broadcasters rack their brains in an attempt to select this year's "Best in the NBA." And since I've just completed my official NBA ballot, I thought I'd let you in on my picks;

MOST VALUABLE PLAYER

The balloting in this category is done on a mathematical basis. We select our top 5 choices for MVP and each is given numerical value... obviously 1 the highest and 5 the lowest. The total point-getter wins the award. They won't even have to count the total this year. Larry Bird a runaway winner. The only question that remains: Will any writer or broadcaster fill in any name other than Bird in the number one slot?

- 1 — Larry Bird...Boston
- 2 — Dominique Wilkins...Atlanta
- 3 — Magic Johnson...Los Angeles
- 4 — Akeem Olajuwon...Houston
- 5 — Dennis Johnson...Boston

Where would the Atlanta Hawks be without Dominique Wilkins? Because of the overwhelming publicity Larry Bird gets, Dennis Johnson's contributions to the Celtics sometimes go overlooked. But when he is out of the lineup, this normally smooth green machine sputters.

EXECUTIVE OF THE YEAR

JAN VOLK...Boston

Filling a legends shoes is no easy task...But Volk has kept the Celts trading mystique in tact without a skip of the heartbeat. Bill Walton for Cedric Maxwell...Jerry Sichting (indirectly) for Quinn Buckner.

ROOKIE OF THE YEAR

XAVIER MCDANIEL...Seattle

By far, the most difficult category to pick this year. Patrick Ewing is the best player of the rookie crop. But, is it fair to give the award to a guy who played only fifty games. Charles Oakley, Karl Malone and longshot Spud Webb have to be viewed as other candidates.

COACH OF THE YEAR

K.C. JONES...Boston

I've always attempted in past

voting to avoid overpicking the team I cover. This year, with a near perfect season in all aspects, it's impossible. Last year, I selected Pat Riley as the coach of the year. I am from the school that doesn't believe in ignoring coaches just because they have the horses. Remember you have to motivate the horses to run. Mike Fratello certainly deserves strong attention in this category. But K.C. is the only coach in NBA history to win sixty-plus games in four seasons...and the only coach to win sixty-plus with two teams. It's about time this man got the recognition he so richly deserves. Nice guys do sometimes finish first.



Jan Volk

Bill Walton

COMEBACK PLAYER OF THE YEAR

BILL WALTON...Boston

This one should be a lock. He's been a major force in this teams success playing the most games this season in his career.

SIXTH MAN AWARD

MICHAEL COOPER...Los Angeles

When Magic Johnson went down earlier this year with an injury, it was Cooper who sparked the Lakers. He always gets assigned to the toughest defensive matchup, whether it be the opposition's high scoring forward or guard. Bill Walton should receive strong consideration as well.

DEFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE YEAR

PAUL PRESSEY...Milwaukee

Like Cooper, Pressey is forced nightly to guard the opponents big gun regardless of his position. Mark Eaton, last years winner and Manute Bol may receive some attention because of the way they forced teams to change up so often offensively. Sidney Moncrief, Michael Cooper and Dennis Johnson may also pick up a vote or two.

ALL NBA TEAM

FIRST TEAM

- F— LARRY BIRD-Boston
- F— DOMINIQUE WILKINS-Atlanta
- C— AKEEM OLAJUWON-Houston
- G— MAGIC JOHNSON-LA
- G— DENNIS JOHNSON-Boston

SECOND TEAM

- F— KEVIN McHALE-Boston
- F— CHARLES BARKLEY-Philadelphia
- C— KAREEM ABDUL-JABBAR-LA
- G— ISIAH THOMAS-Detroit
- G— SIDNEY MONCRIEF-Milwaukee

Dennis Johnson's defensive skills should not be overlooked. The fact that Robert Parish has had help off the bench hurts his chances though it's certainly helped his game. I had trouble keeping him off my second team.

MOST IMPROVED PLAYER

ALVIN ROBERTSON...San Antonio

Robertson should be a easy winner for this new award. A year ago he was a back-up to George Gervin... This year he became the first player ever to pick up a quadruple-double in scoring, rebounds, assists, and steals.

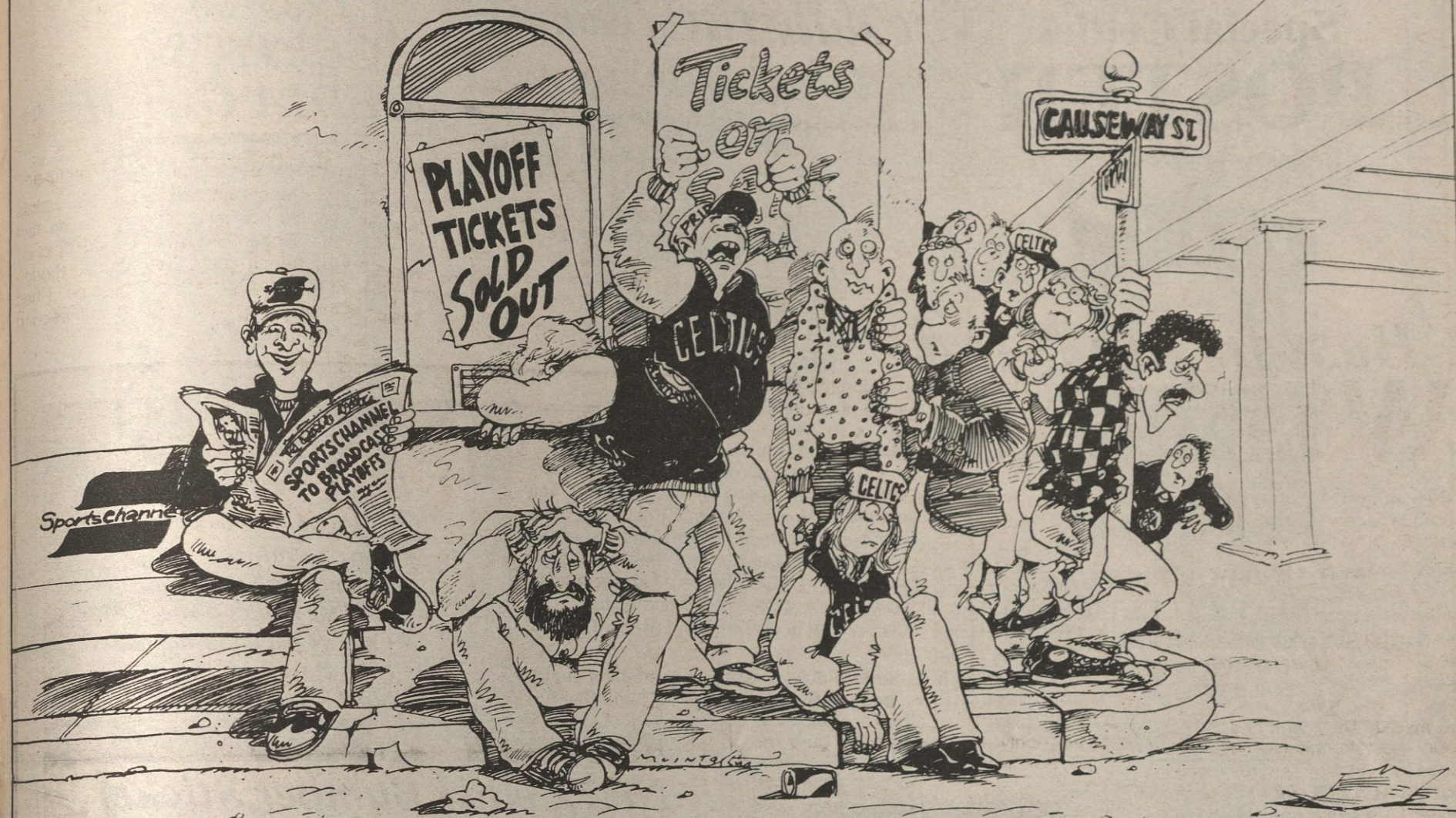


Cheerleaders Raise Money For Leukemia Society

Arare Boston Garden appearance by cheerleaders was a feature of the halftime festivities during the Celtics-Washington Bullets game on Friday, March 28th.

This was an unusual group of cheerleaders, however. The group, from Ayer High School in Ayer, Mass. earned their chance to perform before the home crowd by winning a state-wide fundraising contest for the benefit of the Leukemia Society. The young students collected more money than their counterparts all over Massachusetts in a door-to-door drive.

For their efforts, and Boston Celtics and the Leukemia Society thank the cheerleaders of Ayer High School.



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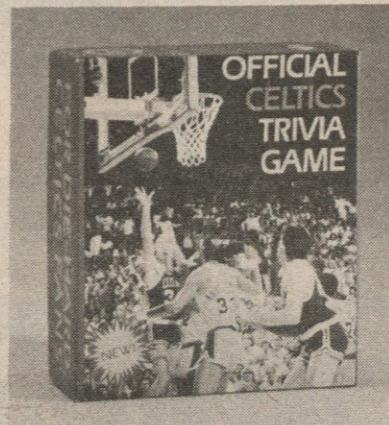
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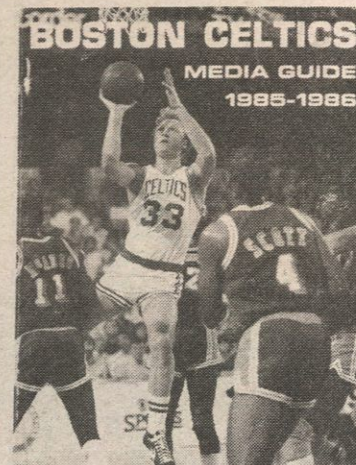


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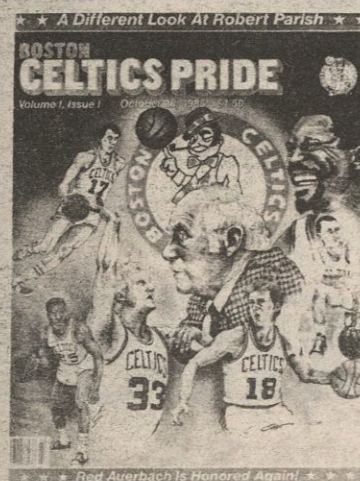
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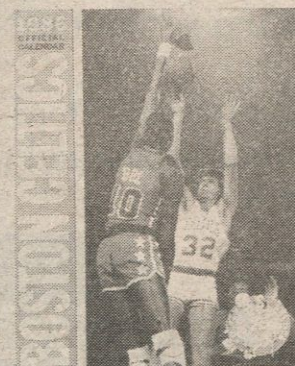
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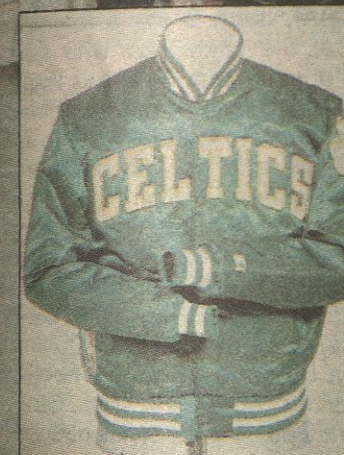
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NBA Notebook



By Terry Lyons

In the remaining weeks of the NBA's 40th regular season, when clubs are hoping to solidify their positions for the 1986 NBA Playoffs. Two clubs, the Washington Bullets and Cleveland Cavaliers, are vying for playoff position under the guidance of new head coaches. "We're going to try to go into the playoffs as prepared as we can and as healthy as we can," said **Kevin Loughery**, the new coach of the Bullets who took over for **Gene Shue** on March 19, 1986. In Cleveland, **Gene Littles** was named coach for the remainder of the season on March 10 after management decided to replace **George Karl**. The Cavs are trying to hold onto the last playoff berth in the Eastern Conference. The two coaching changes made equal the number of mid-season changes a year ago in the league. Last year, the then-Kansas City Kings named **Phil Johnson** coach, replacing **Jack McKinney** and the LA Clippers released **Jim Lynam** and replaced him with **Don Chaney**. In addition to



Gene Littles: New Cavs coach.

those coaching changes in mid-season, **Dave Wohl** of New Jersey, **Matt Guokas** of Philadelphia and **Bernie Bickerstaff** of Seattle were all named to head coaching positions during the off-season. The Portland Trail Blazers received an award for their innovative pay-per-view cable television system known as "Blazer Cable." The award was presented by CableSports, an industry newsletter which recognizes progressive cable TV ventures. The Blazer's cable operations manager, **Marshall Glickman** accepted the award at a recent seminar held in California. Former Milwaukee Bucks stars **Brian Winters** and **Jon McGlocklin** were elected to the South Carolina Athletic Hall of Fame and the Indiana Hall of Fame, respectively. Winters worked as an assistant basketball coach at Princeton University this season while McGlocklin continued his work as color analyst on Bucks TV and radio games in addition to his private investment duties in the Milwaukee area.

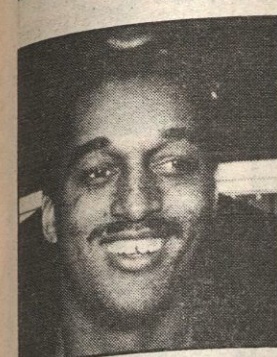
The Houston Rockets experienced a most frightening occurrence last week when All-Star **Ralph Sampson** fell to the floor of the Boston Garden while gathering a rebound in the second quarter of the Rockets 114-107 loss to the Celtics. Sampson crashed to the floor, hitting the back of his head and his mid-back. The 7-4 third-year player was taken from the floor on a stretcher and immediately transported to Massachusetts General Hospital, where X-rays and tests found only a severe bruise to his back. Initial reports after the injury had suggested possible fractures to Sampson's back and loss of sensation in his right side. The Rockets star returned to his hometown of Harrisonburg, VA. for additional examinations and rest but was scheduled to rejoin the team Saturday in Washington. Earlier this month, Sampson established a special scholarship program to his summer basketball camp to be presented to two youngsters between the ages of 12 and 18. The two winners will be selected based on need, community service, academic standing and basketball experience. Sampson's basketball school is held at Eastern Mennonite College in Virginia. New York Knicks rookie swingman **Gerald Wilkins** says his game depends on his quickness. "I'm so quick," he warned, "that sometimes I forget to take the ball with me." Veteran center **Rich Kelley** of Sacramento is playing his last NBA season and says he understands that there will be no special "Rich Kelley Nights" as he

makes his final tour. "After all," said Kelley, "it's not like people are calling on me like they do **Doctor J** or **Kareem**. It's not like I'm quitting on top. I've never been on top." The Utah Jazz continued the traditional Tip the Vip dinner last week where the club's players and coaches work as waiters. Rookie **Karl Malone** teamed with a local radio personality to collect over \$840 in tips which was raised for the National Society to Prevent Blindness. All totalled, the Jazz helped raise more than \$8,400 in donations.

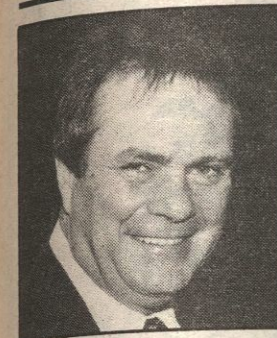
The Continental Basketball Assn. announced its season-ending awards during the past week. The league's Most Valuable Player was Detroit Spirits forward **Michael Young**, a former Boston Celtics draft choice, who averaged 26.8 ppg and 8.6 rpg during the CBA season. Other award winners included: CBA Rookie of the Year, **Michael Adams**, a former Sacramento Kings guard who averaged 17.6 ppg for the Bay State Bombardiers; CBA Newcomer of the Year (presented to a player who has played pro ball previously, but not in the CBA), **John Drew**, a former forward of the Utah Jazz who scored 25.9 ppg for the Wyoming Wildcaters; CBA Coach of the Year, **Mauro Panaggio**, who led Bay State to a 30-18 record and second place in the CBA's Eastern Division. The CBA's post-season All-Star team was also announced and it included: Drew and Young at forward, **Ken Green** of the Florida Stingers (now with the NY Knicks) at center and **Don Collins** of Tampa Bay and **Clinton Wheeler** of Albany at guard. The CBA is currently starting its Division Finals. A recent feature in the LA Daily News entitled, "Hey Coach! Lookin' Good!" told the wave of nattily dressed coaches roaming the sidelines of the NBA. The article made immediate reference to LA Lakers coach **Pat Riley** whose fashion-conscious ways have seldom gone unrecognized. But the article also noted the styles worn by Phoenix Coach **John MacLeod** and the neatly groomed look of LA Clippers Coach **Don Chaney**. Of course, the ever-fashionable style of Utah GM/Coach **Frank Layden** had to be mentioned as well as the long-lost look of Portland Coach **Jack Ramsay** who used to sport wild plaid pants on the sidelines. "I've gotten past that," said Ramsay who has turned to more conventional wear. "There was too much attention focused on it. I like to wear those clothes, but not if they're gonna cause the public awareness that they did."

Kevin McHale: According to SportsChannel's Tommy Heinsohn, since McHale has returned to the starting lineup, he has been less involved in the team's offense. Still, 24 points and 8 rebounds against Nets, Sunday, numbers which were identical in the thrashing of the Pacers, March 19th. McHale blocked 5 shots against the Nets on Sunday and also deflected three against Houston in the 114-107 win, March 24th.

Larry Bird: Bird has been afire; 43 points, including 5 3-point FGs against Cleveland in Hartford, March 18th, 40 points, 7 rebounds, 7 assists against Nets, Sunday; 36



Dennis Johnson



Tommy Heinsohn

Dennis Johnson, Celtics guard, made this statement after the Celtics lost a 13-point lead with less than five minutes left in the March 10 game at Dallas: "The way we played in the last five minutes, people could have lined us up and shot us after the game. We didn't do anything to help ourselves win the ball game."

Bill Walton on playing with Larry Bird: "When he gets that look in his eye, it's like, 'Hey, you have to get it done right now.' If you don't you'll hear it---and that's the way it should be. I love to hear that. Nobody wants to hear a two-time league MVP yelling at you."

Tommy Heinsohn, SportsChannel commentator, giving his opinion of Cleveland's strategy decision of matching Keith Lee, their rookie forward, on Larry Bird: It was a bad decision. Lee is a converted college center and there is no way he can stop Bird. Trying to get Keith Lee to guard Larry Bird is like trying to teach him Greek."

Stan Albeck, Coach of the Bulls, remarks about coaching against the Celtics: "They've got howitzers and we've got B.B. guns in terms of personnel this season. The games seem almost too easy for them. I think they toy with a lot of people. They tease you and they take it away. But that can be dangerous."



Bill Walton



Stan Albeck

By the Numbers — March 16 - March 30

The Celtics returned home from their Texas swing in mid-March and set a team-record for consecutive wins at home (26) with their 122-117 win over New Jersey on Sunday. They went after the league record for one-season consecutive wins on their home floor, set in the 1949-50 season by the Minneapolis Lakers. The victory over the Nets also was the team's 11th consecutive win; their winning streaks this season have included 13 games, 9, and 8 twice.

The NBA record for consecutive wins at home over two seasons is 47, set by Bill Walton's Portland Trail Blazers in the 1976-78 years. With the regular season championship practically clinched, K.C. Jones has stated that one of his goals is give additional rest to some of the starters, especially Dennis Johnson and Larry Bird.

Kevin McHale: According to SportsChannel's Tommy Heinsohn, since McHale has returned to the starting lineup, he has been less involved in the team's offense. Still, 24 points and 8 rebounds against Nets, Sunday, numbers which were identical in the thrashing of the Pacers, March 19th. McHale blocked 5 shots against the Nets on Sunday and also deflected three against Houston in the 114-107 win, March 24th.

Larry Bird: Bird has been afire; 43 points, including 5 3-point FGs against Cleveland in Hartford, March 18th, 40 points, 7 rebounds, 7 assists against Nets, Sunday; 36

points against Houston; 35 points, 12 rebounds, 6 assists, 3 blocked shots in important win over Bucks, March 24th. Set a league record for career 3-point FGs in Cleveland game. Had streak of 44 straight free throws snapped in New Jersey game. The NJ game was his 6th 40 point game of the season and 22nd of his career.

Robert Parish. Parish missed the last Friday's game against the Bullets but sparked the team off the boards against NJ Sunday with 14 rebounds (21 points); plunged Olajuwon into foul trouble and scored 19 with 8 rebounds; 16 points, 9 rebounds, 3 blocks against Bucks.

Dennis Johnson. Bob Ryan thinks this is Johnson's best season. 21 points, 9 assists in 126-105 win over Bulls, March 21; 29 points, 6 assists, 3 steals against Milwaukee; 17 points, 10 assists in win over New Jersey, Sunday. 2-17 shooting but 12 assists, 4 steals vs. Houston.

Danny Ainge. Ainge is beginning to sneak up on people again, sparked 1st quarter explosion against Nets Sunday, ending with 13 points, 4 assists, 2 steals; 10 points, 5 rebounds (including 4 offensive), 4 assists vs. Houston; 11 points, 7 rebounds, 4 assists vs. Bucks. Best scoring effort: 22 points on 10 of 14 shooting vs. Pacers, March 19.

Bill Walton. First start as Celtic a beauty: vs. Bullets, 20 points (his Celtic high) with 12 rebounds and 4 assists; 10 points, 6 rebounds in 28 minutes vs. Bucks; 6 points, 10 rebounds vs. Chicago and 4 points, 4



Larry Bird: On Fire!

assists, 7 rebounds against Houston. Averaging 19.4 minutes per contest in career; high 72 games through Sunday.

Scott Wedman. Wedman readjusting to role off bench after long stretch as starter through the winter. Virtually won game vs. Houston on 9-10 shooting in 18 minutes; had shot 6-10 in 17 minutes vs. Chicago on March 21; 5-11, 11 points, 4 rebounds & blocked shot in win over Washington.

Jerry Sichting. Best scoring effort recently against Bullets: 11 points in 21 minutes on 5 of 6 shooting from the field. Added 4 assists, 1 rebound and 1 steal. Like Walton, Sichting is averaging 19.4 minutes per contest. Excelled in floor leadership, coming off the bench for Ainge against Nets to help blunt Nets' late charge on Sunday. 4 points, 2

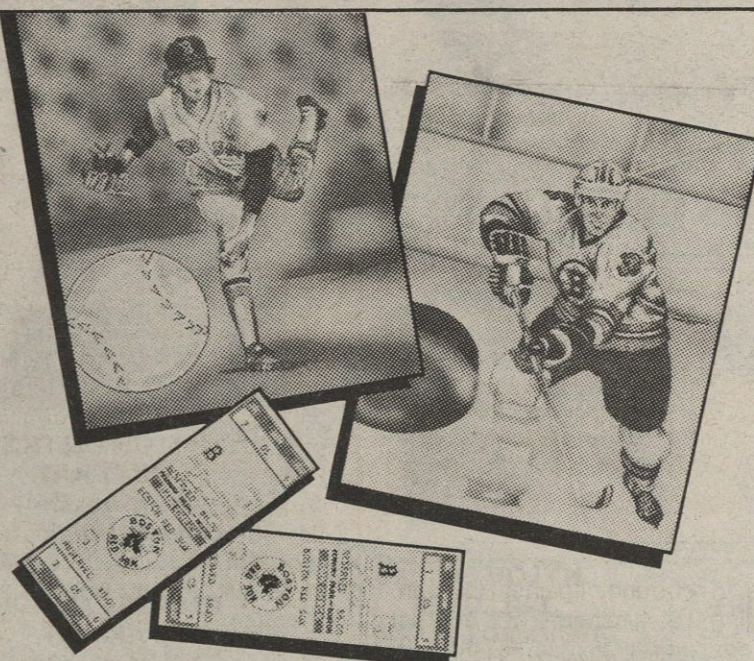
rebounds, 1 assist vs. Nets.

Rick Carlisle. Recently, Carlisle has been shaking his head, bemoaning his own lack of consistency off bench. 4 points, 5 rebounds, 3 assists vs. Bullets in 14 minutes; in 12 minutes, 4 points, 4 rebounds, 1 assist vs. Bulls; 6 points, 3 rebounds, 3 assists in 20 minutes against Cavs.

Greg Kite. Kite has had a contributing type season; he has played bit minutes mostly but has produced when players have been out. Most meaningful minutes recently against Bullets when Parish was out with back injury: in 16 minutes, 6 rebounds, 3 points, 1 assist, 1 block. 3 rebounds, 3 blocks, 1 point, 1 assist in 13 minutes vs. Bulls; 6 rebounds, 2 points, 1 assist in 13 minutes vs. Cavs.

Sam Vincent. Veteran Dennis Johnson sat back at practice recently and commented about Vincent, "He's getting itchy to play, but he's got it (i.e., the ability to be a star player in the league). Best effort of past two weeks against Cleveland: in 14 minutes, scored 12, scored 6-6 from the free throw line (53-58 .914 for season--Bird leads NBA with .897%), added 2 assists and 2 rebounds.

David Thirdkill. Thirdkill's a fine pro player; has been able to adjust to extended bench time while maintaining enthusiasm and conditioning. 4 points and 1 rebound vs. Cavs in 9 minutes; 4 points in 2 minutes vs. Pacers. Playing time this week is needed by Thirdkill in case he's needed in playoffs.



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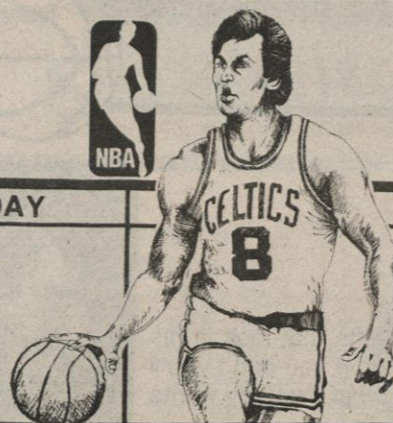
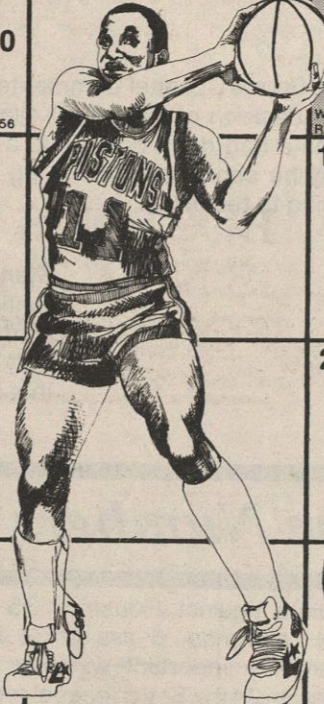
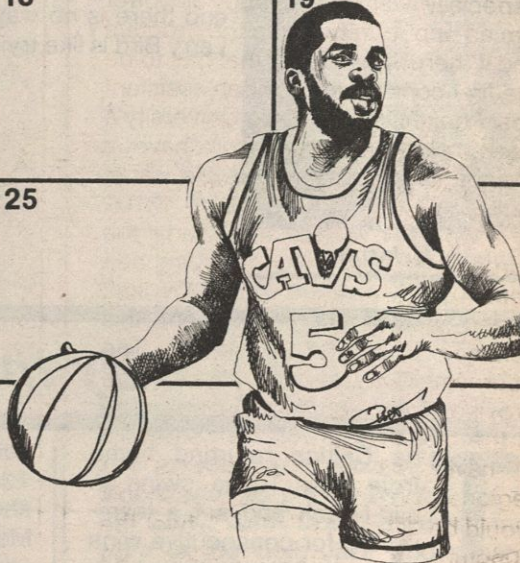
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Basketball Times — College Insight

By Larry Donald

L on Krueger is the new coach at Kansas State, getting the job when the selection committee overruled the athletic director who wanted to hire Georgia Tech assistant George Felton.... There were a few raised eyebrows when Virginia assistant Jim Larranaga took the Bowling Green job. Often promoted on national television by ESPN's Dick Vitale, Larranaga was a serious candidate last year at Providence and has been in the hunt at other places. Despite the fact Bowling Green doesn't pay especially well, the school did offer him an opportunity to run the program and if there's any doubt that has to be the first consideration for an assistant coach take a look at Ohio University's Danny Nee. Larranaga will have a chance to wander down the same path....

I would be terribly surprised if the uproar over teams playing on their home court during the NCAA isn't ended with an announcement this summer changing the policy. The Tournament committee has kept the proviso in place for two seasons. One is the fear that without the prospect of having its team as one of the regional participants host schools would be difficult to find and, two, the spectre of empty seats on television. I predict the committee will come to an understanding those two considerations simply don't outweigh having an equitable tournament. Syracuse, Georgia Tech and LSU will be the last of their kind....

How about this for an emotional rollercoaster. The day before his Jacksonville team departed for an NCAA appearance, coach Bob Wenzel (who survived delicate brain surgery a year ago) learned that his old boss at South Carolina, Bill Foster, had been forced out. Next the Dolphins turned in a dreary performance and lost to Temple, but on the same day Wenzel's wife gave birth to the couple's second child.... Mentioning Foster, you can almost be assured he'll resurface as a head basketball coach somewhere.... This is the second decade in which South Carolina basketball has continued to struggle and it is traceable to the school's decision to bolt the ACC. Gamecock basketball has never really recovered....

Insiders tell me the NCAA investigation of Bradley was touched off by complaints from a player who transferred out and that in the end coach Dick Versace's program will be exonerated....

Navy center David Robinson says he'd like a shot at the 1988 Olympic basketball team.

Just once in those NCAA-produced promotional spots which

feature referees I'd like one of them to admit the most often missed call is travelling.... It is probably worth remembering that North Carolina A&T made the NCAA tournament this year with a line-up which included one freshman, three sophomores and a junior. Big timers looking to schedule

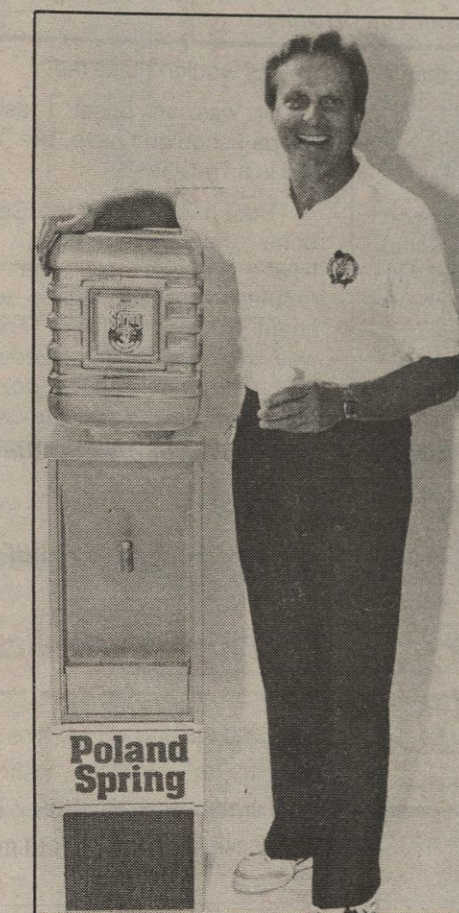
an easy win, beware.

And shouldn't schools considering the fate of their basketball coach recount the story of Mike Krzyzewski at Duke. For three years Coach K struggled to get it going in Durham, but instead of putting more pressure on him, Duke administrators

extended his contract by five years. Look what happened to that program.... And undoubtedly no school was happier to be included in the NCAA's gang of 64 than Mississippi Valley State. Monies earned from their appearance will help keep the school open. Honest....

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Celtics Classics

1950-51

Walter Brown Breaks the "Color Line"

The 1950-51 season has to be considered one of the most significant in Celtics history. This was the year that Chuck Cooper, Red Auerbach, Bob Cousy and Ed Macauley came to Boston.

When the Celtics drafted Cooper, a forward out of Duquesne, on the second round, it raised more than a few eyebrows. Since the NBA had been formed in 1946, no one had dared to draft a black player. That changed on April 25, 1950, when Celtics owner Walter Brown made the move.

When Brown announced the selection of Cooper, another owner said, "Walter, don't you know he's a colored boy?"

Brown snapped back, "I don't give a damn if he's striped, polka dot or plaid. Boston takes Charles Cooper of Duquesne."

So much for the color line. Cooper played four years in Boston before moving on to the Milwaukee Hawks.

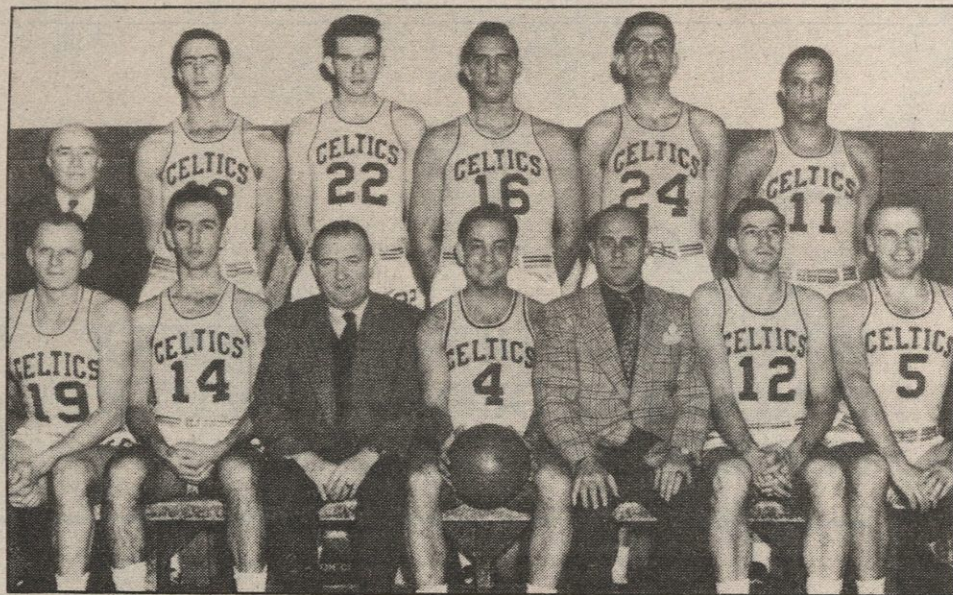
"Chuck Cooper was a man of class, intelligence and sensitivity who blazed a trail that wasn't easy," Cousy once said. "He was also a pretty darn good basketball player."

Cousy was also a pretty darn good player during his days at nearby Holy Cross College, but he didn't exactly impress Auerbach. The 32-year-old Auerbach, whose hair was actually red in those days, had coaching stops in Washington and Tri-Cities before coming to Boston.

Auerbach made it apparent from day one he was going to do things one way-his way. Celtics fans thought for sure Boston would select Cousy, a local favorite. But prior to picking Cooper on the second round, the Celtics tabbed Charlie Share, a 7-foot center from Bowling Green, not Cousy.

At a press conference, members of the Boston media pressured Auerbach on the issue of why he had ignored Cousy. Auerbach turned to Brown and said, "Walter, am I supposed to win or am I supposed to worry about the local yokels and please these guys?" And Auerbach didn't whisper-he said it loud enough for all to hear.

Auerbach wasn't done yet. "I don't give a damn for sentiment or names. That goes for Cousy and everybody else. The only thing that counts with me is ability, and Cousy hasn't proven to me he's got that ability. I'm not interested in someone just because he happens to be a local



1950-51: A very important year in Celtics History.

yokel. That won't bring in more than a dozen extra fans to the building on a regular basis. What will bring fans in is a winning team, and that's what I am going to have."

While Boston fans were incensed that Cousy wasn't a Celtic, the man himself wasn't too enthralled about it, either.

"I was very upset" Cousy said. "I was engaged and had planned to settle and go into business in Worcester. Frankly, it never occurred to me the

Celtics wouldn't take me.

"I was so upset I said some things I shouldn't have, like 'What the hell is a Tri-Cities?'"

But I had to admit the Celtics had done the wisest thing. Besides having every bit the college reputation I had, Share was also about 10 inches taller. And height was what the Celtics needed at the time. They had about a dozen guys who could play the backcourt. If I had

been Auerbach or Walter Brown, I would have made exactly the same move."

As it turned out, ironically enough, Cousy's immortal question of "What the hell is a Tri-Cities?" was never answered. He never reported to the Hawks, and was subsequently traded to Chicago, a franchise which summarily folded.

At a league meeting to disperse the Chicago players, owners couldn't decide which players would go where. So the names of the three best players--Cousy, Max Zaslofsky and Andy Phillip--were placed in a hat. Zaslofsky was given a \$15,000 price tag, Phillip \$10,000 and Cousy \$8,500.

The Celtics had the first draw, but Brown declined it. The New York Knicks went first and chose Zaslofsky, the Philadelphia Warriors grabbed Phillip. That left Cousy to the Celtics.

And if you think Auerbach rolled out the red carpet for Cousy, forget it. He was quoted in a newspaper as saying, "Cousy is going to have to make this ballclub."

Then they met each other in person for the first time.

"It's a big man's game and you're not a big man," Auerbach told Cousy. "You're going to work in the backcourt with Sonny Hertzberg. He knows the league and can teach you a lot. I hope you make this team, if you can, I'll be glad to have you. If you can't don't blame me. A little guy has two strikes against him in this league."

How did Cousy react to this diatribe?

"I was impressed," Cousy said. "His bluntness made sense. And the more I got to know Red, the more I realized everything he did in basketball made sense."

Small or no, Cousy was indeed a player, and it didn't take him long to establish that fact. In his first game as a Celtic, against Fort Wayne on November 1, 1950, Cousy scored 16 points and grabbed seven rebounds. Incredibly, he had no assists in the Celtics 107-84 loss. Cooper and Macauley had nine points apiece in that game.

The Celtics ended the year with a 39-30 record, finishing in second place.

There is an interesting footnote to the story: Remember all the fuss about taking Share instead of Cousy? Well, Share never played a second year for the Celtics. He was traded after Boston acquired Macauley.

Past and Present

Celtics Greats

The Answer to a Trivia Question

Tom Thacker

What are the chances of your name cropping up on the game cards of one of those sports trivia games? Pretty slim, right? Well, it happened to a Cincinnati named Tom Thacker. He was sitting around his house one day, playing such a game when one of his daughters noticed a question on a card pertaining to him.

Thacker had a rather non-descript career in the NBA and ABA, but has to his credit a feat not even the greatest players of all time can claim. He is the only player ever to be a member of an NCAA, NBA and ABA championship team.

A 6-3 guard, Thacker was on the NCAA champion University of Cincinnati teams of 1961 and 1962. Six years later, he found himself on the roster of the NBA titlist Celtics. In 1970, Thacker was a member of the 1970 ABA champion Indiana Pacers. And this is an accomplishment that will never again be duplicated.

"That's one trivia question no one can answer," Thacker says. "They think of everyone but Tom Thacker."

Of course, that's because Thacker wasn't exactly a renowned player. That 1967-68 season was his first and only campaign with the Celtics, during which he averaged 4.2 points in 65 games as a reserve guard. Thacker was with the Cincinnati Royals from 1963-64 to '65-66, and spent much of this time on the bench.

Thacker is currently living in Cincinnati and working in the printing business.

"I backed into it," Thacker says. "I needed a job four years ago, and went to a buddy, who told me to get into the business." It's going okay, it's a lucrative job."

Despite that, Thacker would like to return to coaching. He's coached at the high school level in the Cincinnati area, and was head coach of the University of Cincinnati women's basketball team. Most recently, he was head coach of the CBA Cincinnati Slammers. He was also the club's assistant boss.

"My true love is coaching basketball," Thacker says. "I've been sending resumes from East Coast to West. It's a tough game-- you have to know somebody. Coaches get recycled-- it's musical chairs. Every day you pick up the paper, you see people changing jobs. You've got to be where the coaches are so they know you're available."

While being the head man or an



Tom Thacker: Wants coaching job.

aide for the Slammers isn't the same as having the same function for the Celtics or Lakers, Thacker feels benefitted from working in the CBA.

"It was a tremendous experience," he says. "It's a step down--guys who had hard luck in the NBA or couldn't make it in the NBA. They were a step slow or an inch too short. There's a lot of good players in the CBA although a small percentage are coming into the NBA."

Thacker also enjoyed his stint at Cincinnati. When he came to UC the school's women's basketball program was more of a club set-up, but Thacker quickly molded them into a competitive Division I team. In fact, under Thacker, Cincy won its league title four years straight and went to the NCAA's every season.

To Thacker, there was a noticeable difference between coaching women and men.

"Women are more dedicated to the game," Thacker says. "They're more willing to listen than men. Men come from the background that they know everything and can do it all."

"But I didn't have to extend my patience with women. They don't

have the physical ability to do the same things as men."

Thacker says he left Cincinnati because of financial considerations.

"There wasn't any money in coaching," He says. "I had another career to pursue. I would have stayed had I made more money. Coaching is never a part-time job, it's a full-time job with part-time money."

Although Thacker was a part-time player with the Celtics and was around for just one year, he was able to collect a championship ring.

"My boyhood dream was to play for the Celtics," Thacker says. "Putting the green-and-white uniform on when I got there made my boyhood dream come true. That team has a lot of tradition."

"The Celtics believed they couldn't lose and they played that

way each night they were on the floor. And they're still playing that way."

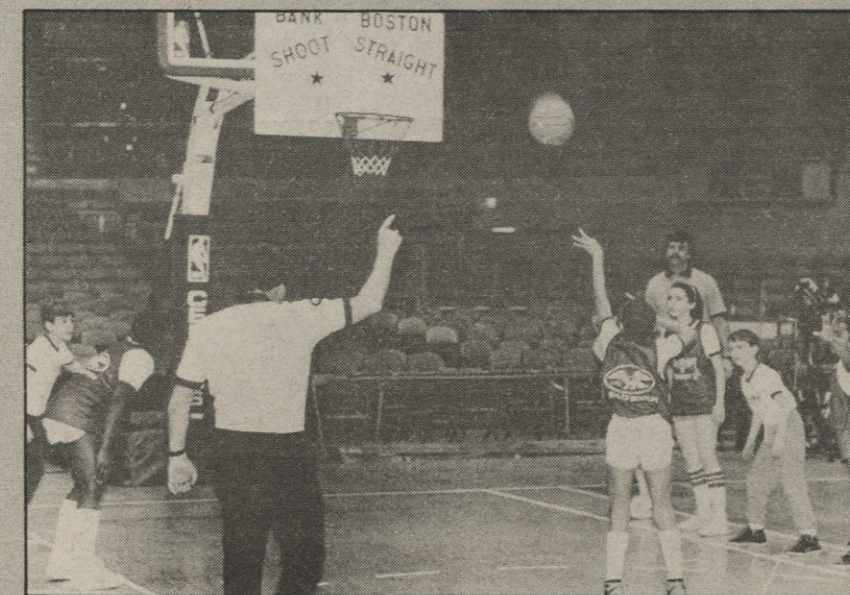
Thacker later surfaced in the ABA, retiring after the '70-71 season.

"The ABA was super," Thacker says. "It was like the new kid on the block. It was a little more positive than the CBA and produced better results. They took some players from the NBA and were equally good as the NBA. The NBA just had more experience."

"The talent was super --- Julius Erving, Rick Barry, Artis Gilmore, Dan Issel. They had quality players."

What Thacker would like to find is a quality coaching job, be it as an assistant or head coach.

"I hope to get hooked up with a college or the NBA," Thacker says. "I wouldn't mind spending a couple of years as an assistant, then getting a head coaching job. I want to coach no more than 10 years, then retire."



Bank of Boston Sponsors ShootStraight Tournament

For a number of years now, the Bank of Boston, a major sponsor of the Boston Celtics, has also been the sponsor of Shoot Straight, a very exciting youth basketball tournament. Prior to the Celtics game against the Houston Rockets on Monday, March 24th, Tournament Director Mike Jarvis, now the head basketball coach at Boston University, once again led his young hoopers into the Boston Garden to compete against each other.

As in the past, teams of third, fourth, fifth and sixth grade boys and girls from programs in the South End, Roxbury, New Bedford and Dorchester participated in the event. Specially fitted 8½-foot Shoot Straight baskets were once again hoisted atop the Garden's regulation 10 foot hoops and undersized Shoot Straight balls were used to facilitate play.

After the games, the more than 100 players were the guests of the Bank of Boston for supper and then watched the Celtics overcome the Rockets in their NBA contest.

"The event gives us a chance to show some of the benefits of Shoot Straight, but most importantly, the kids have one heck of a good time," commented Jarvis.

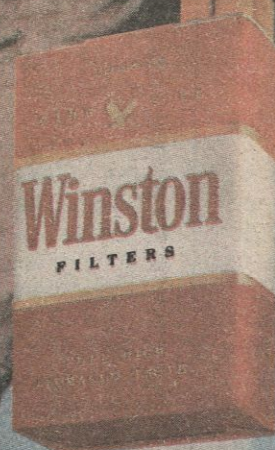


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